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Children's Newspaper

The CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPER

AND CHILDREN'S PICTORIAL

The Story of the World Today for the Men and Women of Tomorrow

Number 120 — Week Ending JULY 2, 1921 — EDITED BY ARTHUR MEE — Ready Every Friday 2d.

The Glory of Summer in Photogravure
See My Magazine for July—Now Ready

WATER WANTED FOR THE THAMES

STONEHENGE AND ITS SECRETS

NEW LIGHT ON AN OLD MYSTERY

The Ancient Men who Came from Africa to Salisbury Plain

TERRIBLE MEMORIES OF LONG AGO

Stonehenge being dead yet speaketh; and if its message has been righly interpreted we have as marvellous a story as has ever been told of this old land of ours.

Since the war the great monument on Salisbury Plain has become national property, and excavation, restoration, and inquiry have led to discoveries more vivid and romantic than we had ever dared to expect.

How came it that these huge stones of Stonehenge are of two kinds, one kind big, gigantic columns, which could obviously have been collected from the Plain itself, while the other sort, the so-called foreign stones, were of an entirely different variety, and of unknown origin? And what were the complete circle of depressions in the ground marked on old maps of Stonehenge?

Time's Magic Story

The mysterious depressions disappeared long ago, but they have now all been discovered afresh, and in all but four of them human remains have been unearthed. The depressions are evidently the original sites of the foreign stones, and the bones found in them are those of the victims sacrificed as offerings to the gods of our forefathers when the stones were removed within the circle of the greater pillars gathered from the Plain.

What a magic story of time and people is here! The work of the earliest form of Stonehenge we now know was that of Megalithic people, so called from the character of the monuments they erected, megalite being Greek for a large stone.

Wanderings of a Race

Those people seem to have originated in Northern Africa, and to have crossed into Europe by the Straits of Gibraltar; and perhaps, indeed, there was no Strait, but dry land, in those days. They covered Western Europe and the British Isles; they spread east through Arabia to India and Japan, leaving their signature in stone monuments existing everywhere today. They built the first Stonehenge with stones they brought across the sea and rafted up the Avon.

This carries us back into the misty twilight days of man's story, for the Megalithic men were long before the Celts, and worked only with stone. So did the first Celts who, long afterwards, followed them into Britain, ages before the use of bronze and iron. Then the Celts came, and mingled their own faith with much of the faith of the old nation whom they conquered. They found the first circle of Stonehenge, adopted the religious rites associated with it, and built a temple of their own; but the first stones were sacred to them, and they uprooted them and set them up within the great circle of stones from the Plain, with which they made the newer Stonehenge.

The mysterious depressions are simply the holes in which the first stones were originally embedded; and when the removal was made, the Celts, to appease the gods who might be offended at the removal of the stones, sacrificed human beings, slew them within the inner circle, burned the bodies, and placed their remains in the holes where the Megalithic columns had so long stood. There, for centuries, they have remained until now.

But much more than this has come to light. It is established that, ages before Romans took up chariot racing, the Britons had their course for chariot races at Stonehenge; the course has been traced out at last, and so have the high mounds which formed the grand stands and points of vantage for the thousands of spectators who cheered their favourite charioteers perhaps before Rome had emerged from the condition of a barbarous village. Hosts of relics have been found in the digging, flint tools, bronze remains, pottery, and a dozen other items of the commerce of those old days. From these it has been possible to reconstruct a picture of Stonehenge as a great market of the period.

Men came there from all parts to buy and sell, their safety guaranteed by the sanctity of the district, which was not only a temple of religion, but of law.

Stonehenge must have been one of the most important places in old Britain, centre of commerce, seat of law and learning, and, above all, the temple of a religion which was all terror and horror, sacrifice and torture. Truly we have here sermons in stones as thrilling as anything imagined by Shakespeare.

Yet all that remains today of those teeming thousands who crowded the temple, the mart, and the course, are these columns of stone and the pathetic little pits in the chalk where lie these poor charred bones. *Picture on page 12*

And Must the War Horse Die?



Thirty thousand war horses in Mesopotamia are threatened with destruction owing to the lack of food on the spot and the prohibitive cost of transporting them home. See next column

From the picture by C. E. Stewart, by permission of the Autotype Company

THOUSANDS OF HEROES TO DIE

Sad Fate of War Horses in Mesopotamia

CARRYING THE ALLIES TO VICTORY

A terrible revelation has been made in Parliament. The War Office has too many horses out in Mesopotamia, where there is not enough for them to eat and the cost of maintenance is enormous; and the question has arisen as to what is to be done with these dumb heroes that helped to win the war.

The proposal of the Government was to reduce the number from just under fifty thousand to just under twenty thousand by destroying great numbers of them. Thirty thousand, it was stated in Parliament, would have to be destroyed.

The Rush to Death

It seems a terrible fate for these noble creatures, but the cost of bringing so many horses home would be tremendous. It is supposed that it would cost not less than £40 or £50 each to bring them to London, even if there were room for them.

The vision comes up before our eyes of those thrilling charges in which the horse played so great a part not many years ago. Once, in the Egyptian desert, at a given signal some hundreds of horses burst out of cover at full speed, carrying our men across the sand to surprise a Turkish stronghold. They kept up their speed for miles; they did wonders beyond belief; they arrived at their destination and won the day; and then—*then half of them fell dead.*

It seems a shame that creatures like these should be slaughtered in thousands now. In war and in peace, in the hour of trial and danger, in times of ease and recreation, horse and man have shared the perils and the pleasures of the great adventures of mankind. We have ridden to power and pride on the back of this willing friend of man; East and West, and all the fertile cradle of civilisation that lies between them, have been snatched from desolation by the power the service of the horse has given to man.

The Riders to Fame

From remotest ages until now the horse has been the vehicle of victory. Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar, Columbus, Wellington, Napoleon—each one of them rode on a horse. Without his horse not one could have carved out his career.

For power to conquer, for ability to retreat with life preserved and the chance to fight another day, the horse has always been the means to man's great end; and even now, in the Motor Age, the horse will take its rider where tyres and petrol fail. Through the long, long years man and his faithful steed have come together. Down the sounding corridors of time we hear the roar of his thundering hoofs and catch the low whinny of this friend who never fails.

And must these horses die, then?

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C.N. BOY SEES EINSTEIN

Famous Man Among the British Astronomers

PLAYING TRAINS AND BRICKS WITH CHILDREN

By the C.N. Boy Astronomer

I had always wanted to see Einstein, the man who has caused us to change all our ideas about so many things, and has puzzled most of the best thinkers of our time, the man whose name is now known almost as widely as that of Newton.

Knowing that the great man was in London, it was with much excitement that I went to the meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society at Burlington House, for I knew that, if possible, he would be present; and he was.

Everyone there knew he was coming, and everyone talked of him at tea in the library. Towards five o'clock, when the meeting was to begin, we near the door began to watch expectantly, and at last, almost exactly at five, four men appeared in the doorway, Professor Einstein, Lord Haldane, Dr. Freundlich, the well-known German astronomer, and Professor Eddington, the President of the Royal Astronomical Society.

The Great Man Enters

For a minute they were not noticed except by those near by, but gradually conversation lessened and almost ceased, and it seemed to me that there was a consciousness of great respect and wonderment among all present. Then Dr. Dyson, the British Astronomer-Royal, stepped forward and shook hands with each of the four, and welcomed Einstein in the name of British astronomy.

To the meeting itself Einstein spoke a few pleasant words in German, Lord Haldane translating. He said he wished to express his thankfulness for the great hospitality he was receiving in England, and his gratitude to the Royal Astronomical Society for the part it had played in discussing his theory of Relativity.

From what I could see, Professor Einstein is a very reserved and gentle man, and we are told that he is very fond of his fiddle and of little children, playing at trains and bricks with children and completely understanding their point of view.

Another thing that appealed to me was the way in which England and Germany, fighting each other to the death so short a time ago, are now entertaining each other's scientific men. J.W.

A NEW SORT OF SHIP

Something Better than Concrete

One of the latest discoveries in the shipping world is a new composition for building ships.

This composition is an improvement on that used for the concrete ships which were first experimented with during the war, and has the advantage of being light and extremely tough. It is very elastic, which makes it less liable to crack and gives it greater resistance to blows.

The new material has the additional virtue of being cheap to manufacture.

In the Auction Rooms

The following prices have lately been paid in the auction rooms for objects of interest.

An Egyptian statuette	£1870
Eight Chippendale chairs	£672
A painting by Murillo	£609
A portrait painted by Verspronck	£535
A Louis XVI cabinet	£509
Gift copy of Burns's poems	£420
An Assyrian inscribed slab	£310
An Egyptian model boat	£270
Bust of an Egyptian queen	£220
Gift copy of a Goldsmith poem	£185
A Tudor oak table	£147
A Henry VIII apostle spoon	£90
William and Mary period settee	£73
An engraving by Turner	£41

ENGLISH CRICKET MEETS ITS MASTER

Australia Winning

PRIDE OF THE MOTHERLAND LOST IN THE WAR

By an Australian in England

As at Nottingham, so at St. John's Wood—England has again gone down before the splendid eleven led by Warwick Armstrong, and her chance of wresting from Australia those mythical "ashes" is now a faint one.

Counting the Test matches played last season in Australia, England has now lost seven in succession, and this seems to us to suggest that, for the present at any rate, England has met her master.

We have followed the resumption of these great games between the Motherland and the youngest of her Dominions with something more than interest, and if there is one feature of them which has seemed to us to stand out it is the really wonderful fight England has made against the keen young cricketers, who have beaten her.

A Glorious Fight

The truth is that the flower of English cricket was destroyed during the long years of war. Australia made sacrifices—sacrifices that won her a place in history second to that of no other country; but what were Australia's losses compared with England's? The writer is an Australian, and he knows—and Australia knows.

The wonder is, indeed, not that England has been beaten, but that she has made such a glorious fight against probably the greatest Eleven Australia has ever sent to England. In cricket, as in all other games that are played for the spirit of the game, it matters so little which side secures the victory. The great thing is that, win or lose, both sides should "play the game."

A Great Tradition

England has gone down in the Test matches so far played, but she has gone down with the flag flying.

Another day she will beat Australia as decisively as Australia has beaten her, and then, if Australia is as great in defeat as England has proved herself to be at Trent Bridge and Lord's, Australia will certainly have something to be proud of.

More, if an Australian player with the record and prestige of that great cricketer and sportsman Commander Fry sets as fine an example of unselfishness as Commander Fry did in declining to take his place in the national team because he did not think his form entitled him to it, Australia will have added a great tradition to her cricketing annals.

Certainly there is nothing finer to be found anywhere in the annals of cricketing England.

MESSENGER PIGEONS

A Tragic Discovery

The legs of more than a hundred homing pigeons have been found in a falcon's nest in Weymouth Bay. Many of them had rings and numbers, which explain why the messenger pigeons did not return home.

Many of the rings have been sent to the National Homing Association for identification. Weymouth is a centre for the release of messenger pigeons belonging to homing societies in the North of England, and it is sad to find that dozens of these birds appear to have met a tragic fate soon after their release.

THE LIVE WIRE ON A TRAMCAR

Soldier's Story of a Soldier

SYMPATHY WHERE IT IS DUE

We gave a week or two ago the story of a miner at Falkirk, in Scotland, who grasped a live wire on a tram and threw it out of danger's way, and we spoke of the heroism of the miner, which contrasted curiously with the action of a soldier who jumped from the tram in the excitement.

The C.N. is delighted to apologise to this unknown soldier in view of a letter it has received from one who knows the facts. It is another soldier who writes, and it is pleasing to have the tribute of this soldier who is well to another unknown soldier who is ill. We give our correspondent's letter here.

> I know you give, and I admire you for it, honour where honour is due, and sympathy where sympathy is due, which one seldom finds in the usual run of public papers.
>
> The soldier you referred to on the tram, who was an Englishman, had been that day presented with other maimed heroes to the Crown Prince of Japan in Edinburgh, and after the ceremony had obtained permission to visit some friends at Falkirk. It was while there that the incident occurred on the tram.
>
> The soldier seems to have seen much service in the war, and is only now beginning to recover. His face had been severely wounded, and was all patched up. The rest is simple. Anyone who has been through war knows only too well that this soldier's nerves would be highly strung. The thought of danger would be enough for him, and his first impulse (foolish, perhaps) would be to jump to safety. In jumping he narrowly missed a motor lorry.
>
> He belongs to a class of men who need our sympathy, but how little of this is found for them in the mad rush of the world today? We are too inclined—Governments and people—to forget the debt we owe these men.

We thank our soldier friend for this most welcome explanation, and for his appreciation of what he calls the C.N.'s "stand for Peace and Right."

"Like this poor man, I fought in France," our correspondent says, "but I trust your dreams of peace will all come true, and that our nation's manhood will never have again to go through the horrors of war."

GOOD NEWS

What Mrs. Kendal Wants

AND WHAT SHE MAY HAVE

We like Mrs. Kendal, the actress of our fathers' and mothers' days. Everybody likes her; she is one of the rarest women who ever entertained an audience.

Mrs. Kendal has lately been talking at an exhibition of arts and crafts by members of the Women's Institutes, and she has been saying some stern but proper things about the manners of people in these days. What we are interested in especially is the following paragraphs, which close The Times report:

> Then, having soundly abused most things modern women do, Mrs. Kendal inquired if there was a single newspaper which only told the pleasant things of life.
>
> "We have so many sorrows of our own that we ought to have only pleasant things in our papers," she said.

Somebody suggested the Children's Newspaper as answering the need, and Mrs. Kendal said she must buy it.

It is not always easy to be cheerful in a world like this, but the C.N. does its best, and we hope Mrs. Kendal will like us. We liked her very much when we had a talk with her long, long ago in the happy days before the Shadow fell upon the world.

EXPLORING THE ATOM

SOMETHING NEW DONE

Scientist Dives Deeper into the Mystery of Matter

WHAT IT ALL MEANS

By a Scientific Expert

Some of the wonderful work that is going on to discover the secrets of the atoms was described a few days ago by Sir Ernest Rutherford in London. The discovery was announced that the nitrogen atom can actually be broken up, and infinitely small amounts of nitrogen converted into hydrogen.

Hydrogen, the lightest and simplest substance in Nature, is composed of atoms which are each made up of one electron and one charge of positive electricity. Heavier elements have atoms composed of several electrons held together by an equal number of positive charges, so that every element is exactly the same in composition as hydrogen is, consisting merely of electrons cemented together, as it were, in a nucleus of positive electricity.

What Sir Ernest Rutherford has now accomplished is to break up atoms of heavier elements—not only of nitrogen, but of aluminium, phosphorus, and sodium—and to disintegrate them into the parent substance, hydrogen.

Things Too Small to Realise

This transmutation, marvellous as it is, is still more remarkable when we remember that the particles of matter dealt with are so small that no mind can even picture them. Their presence can only be detected by the fact that when they strike a screen of zinc blende they make it glow brightly and reveal themselves by a bright flash.

It was found that by causing a stream of the alpha particles which are given off by radium to discharge into nitrogen gas, about one alpha particle in every ten million would come into collision with a nitrogen atom and hurl it forward. This collision is enough to break up or upset the electrons and positive electricity which constitute the atom, with the result that some hydrogen is formed by stray electrons which escape with simple charges of positive electricity.

Many people think that if nitrogen or aluminium can be transformed into hydrogen the changing of lead or copper into gold may soon follow. But these are foolish ideas. The wonderful work going on today is showing us how all matter is made up of one parent substance, but where a change is effected it is always *downward*, from a metal to a gas, not from one metal to another.

The day when we can re-combine electrons with positive electricity in any way we like and *construct* elements must still be considered very far off, even if it can be expected ever to arrive.

NELSON'S SHIP

The Victory in Danger

It is said that Nelson's flagship, the Victory, on the deck of which he fell and in which he died—shot by a boy in the tops of one of the French ships near—is in danger of sinking.

The vessel lies at Portsmouth, and it is suggested that to save her from breaking up the hull should be cemented and encased in steel. As there appear to be no Admiralty funds from which this can be done a private appeal is suggested.

The C.N. long ago urged that the Victory should be brought to London and preserved on the Thames, where millions could see her, and we have no doubt that if the ship could be repaired and brought to the capital the cost of her repair would be forthcoming many times over.

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PARIS SEES A GREAT MAN'S WORK

Paintings of Jean Ingres

HELPING THE REGIONS SHATTERED BY THE WAR

By Our Paris Correspondent

Paris is now enjoying an exhibition of the works of her great painter Ingres. This exhibition is organised for the benefit of the devastated regions; every owner of a picture by this artist has been willing to lend his painting, and so from all parts beautiful things have come that people have never seen before and will probably never see again.

Everyone should know the name of Ingres, the greatest French painter of the eighteenth century, and one of the most gifted men in the history of art.

Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres was born at Montauban in 1780. When he was only eight his drawings were shown in public; at nine he gave concerts in which his violin was very much applauded; at ten he took part in tragedies played at Montauban.

Man Who Loved His Work

His study, under David's direction, was crowned when he was only twenty by a great prize at Rome, and later, after being director of the Beaux Arts School in Paris and a member of the Institute of France, Ingres became head of the French Academy in Rome.

This splendid artist, who was to live to be 87 years old, always had bad health, and asthma and rheumatism often kept him in bed, but his love of work and his will-power mastered all these annoyances, and his work was immense.

His oil portraits are famous for their truth and precision, and his pencil portraits are perhaps still more appreciated for their exquisite fineness and extraordinary likeness.

He was kindness itself. As some of his pupils were poor he would refuse to accept their fees, and he would throw open his studio on Sundays to all who came, without asking who they were or where they came from, and without any fee. No wonder such a master was almost worshipped by his followers.

A Passion for Music

King Charles X, being about to establish a museum for antiquities, had ordered several artists to work at the decoration of the new rooms. Ingres painted the Apotheosis of Homer, which he pictured remarkably. One day, as the artists were admiring it, Ary Scheffer said to a friend: "Can you tell me if there is anything as beautiful in Italy?" "There may be something as good, but better there is none!" was the answer.

In 1845 Ingres was given the Legion of Honour, so great was his fame. Poets sang him, theatres played him, foreign nations invited him to visit them. At 75 Ingres painted the Birth of the Muses, a picture of most wonderful elegance, unmatched nobleness, and grand vision. The greatest happiness of the artist was when somebody played music for him while he was painting.

Love of music was a passion with him, and when he was so tired that he could not paint he used to play his fiddle. "My Ingres violin," a Frenchman would often say, meaning anything especially beloved outside his proper work.

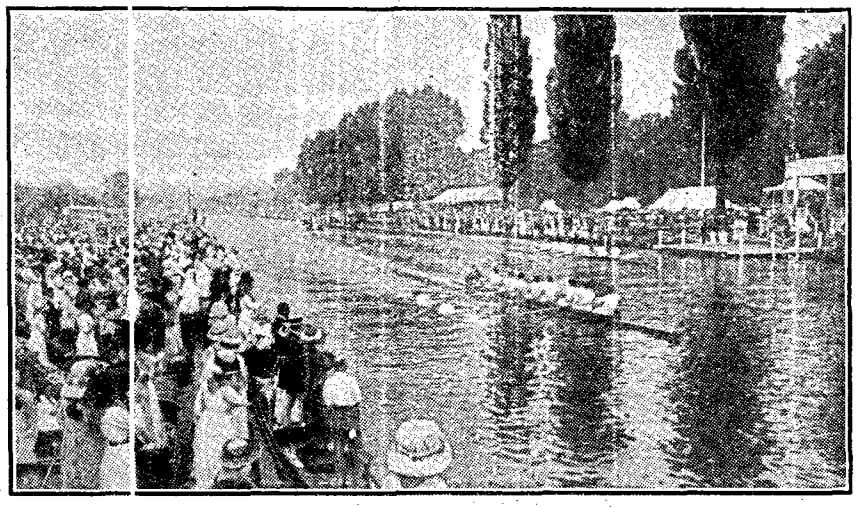
WE WISH HE WERE

Dear Editor, If I were a millionaire and lived in England I would buy the Children's Newspaper and go to see all the strange things mentioned in it.

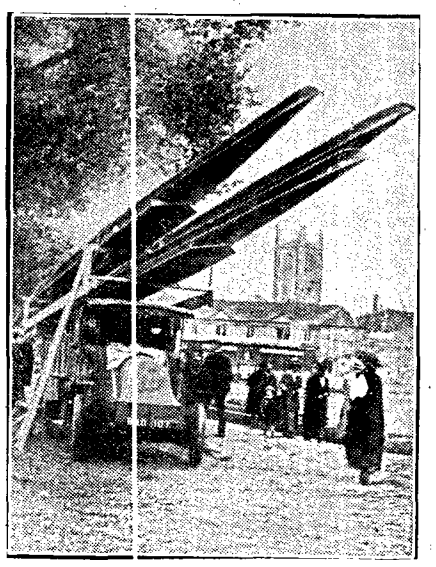
A Boy of Thirteen.

Wellington, New Zealand.

THE GREAT RIVER FESTIVAL



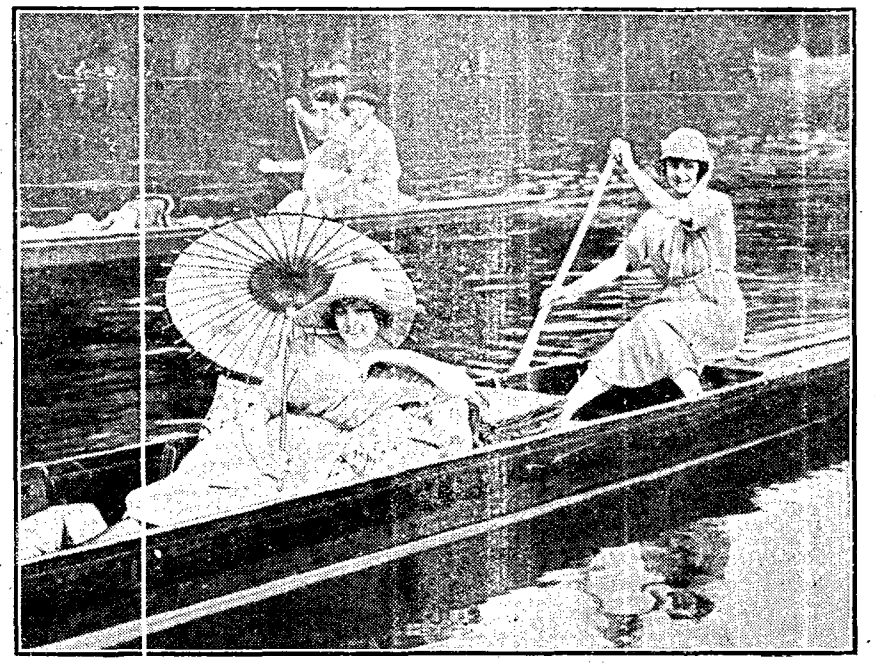
The course at Henley with a race in progress



The Eton boats go to Henley by car



A happy party leaving a houseboat



Visitors paddling down to the course



A party of girls set out in a canoe

Henley is the great rowing festival of the year, when all the most brilliant oarsmen meet on the Thames and compete for the coveted honours of the rowing world. With sunshine and warm weather, no more picturesque and glorious festival can be imagined. These photographs show scenes on the river during Henley week

BETTER RAILWAYS

AND HOW TO GET THEM

Hope From a Bill Now Before Parliament

THINGS THAT MUST BE DONE

By Our Economic Correspondent

Our railways are to be reformed under a Bill now before Parliament.

The general plan is to simplify and improve the working by grouping the railways under six managements: Southern, Western, North-Western and Midland, North-Eastern and Eastern, West Scottish, and East Scottish.

There is much to be said for this, because Great Britain is quite a small island and its railway lines are short. Railways were a British invention, and, just because the first experiments were made here, our rail transport grew up without much scientific arrangement. About a thousand railway companies were started, though the number was reduced as time went on.

Wasting Energy

There are only 20,000 miles of railway line in Great Britain, but their cost was enormous owing to heavy charges for land, law expenses, and lines unnecessarily built. Six managements certainly seem enough for such an undertaking.

Many great defects arose from our piecemeal system of railway working. The different companies set up different standards for every detail. Locomotives, wagons, signalling apparatus — every item varies from line to line. This is very wasteful, because standardisation lowers the cost of manufacture and facilitates repair and actual running.

As to the goods wagons, any one who reads this should look carefully at the next goods train. It will consist of a row of small, odd-shaped trucks, painted with the names of various colliery companies, coal merchants, or brickworks. That is because most of our railway wagons are owned by private persons.

Our Toy Wagons

Think what that means. Every private wagon—and there are hundreds of thousands—has to be returned empty to its owner after it has been unloaded. If it has travelled with slates from Wales to London it has to go back empty from London to Wales. That is very wasteful, for the empty wagon might be usefully employed in carrying something from London to Wales. It seems impossible that so stupid a system should have lasted so long.

Also, our trucks are not big enough. Many of them are like toys compared with the wagons used in America.

One thing that stands in the way of reform is the small "loading gauge" of the British railway. What is this loading gauge?

It is the amount of clearance afforded by the tunnels, platforms, bridges, and so on. It will be understood that if platforms, tracks, and tunnels leave a narrow running space, big wagons cannot be used, and that is what many of our lines are suffering from. Only toy trucks, holding a few tons, will go through many of their spaces.

A Question of Tunnels

Under the new Railways Bill the Ministry of Transport has power to enforce reforms and give us larger and cheaper working.

The standard all round should be raised. Without this reform would be useless, for if one line has a small tunnel, no train with a big wagon can go through it. Modern giant wagons, cheap to run, must be able to pass over all tracks. And wagons must be owned by the railways, so that they can be properly used.

Electrification must be simplified and cheapened. The steam locomotive has become obsolete. With electric railways we should travel cleanly and cheaply.

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BREAKWATER MADE OF AIR

NEW WAY OF FIGHTING THE SEA

Blowing Bubbles to Break the Force of the Waves

ENGINEER'S CLEVER PLAN

Air bubbles are now being used successfully to fight the terrific force of the waves that are hurled against the shore during a fierce tempest.

The power of the waves when lashed by raging winds is scarcely credible. They can take great masses of stone, weighing several hundredweights, and hurl them through the air; they can dislodge and wash away blocks of granite weighing several tons; they can smash up a powerful breakwater that has been built with all the engineering skill of the twentieth century.

It seemed that in certain places, and in certain conditions, nothing was strong enough to resist their onslaught, but now it is found that air bubbles blown into the waves can do what all the granite and concrete in the world is unable to do.

The Gale in the Night

This great discovery was made by an American engineer, Mr. Philip Brasher, who learned, in the school of adversity, that stone breakwaters were useless at certain exposed spots.

Some years ago he was interested in a commercial venture at Brighton Beach, New York, and to protect some property a breakwater was built. But one night there was a fierce gale, and in a few minutes the stone barrier was entirely washed away.

Mr. Brasher had worked on a ranch, and he was also a keen footballer, and, remembering that the only way to stop a runaway steer or a rushing player was to pull his legs from under him, he came to the conclusion that a similar plan might be tried with the waves.

An Engineer's Inspiration

He pondered on the matter for some time, and then, like an inspiration, the idea came to him that compressed air injected into the body of a billow from below would break its force.

He decided to attack the storm waves at a point well off the shore; and to this end he arranged for a pipe to carry the compressed air out along the bottom of the sea and then release it at a certain distance, so that the bubbles would rise in a cloud through the water.

Mr. Brasher took out a patent, and at Crotch Island, Maine, erected his first plant, where the wharf of a quarry was so exposed that boats could not be loaded when the wind was blowing from the east. When everything was ready one day a strong wind blew up, and the spray was thrown as high as the trees on shore. The compressed air was turned on, the bubbles released, and within 15 minutes the water along the shore was so smooth that the superintendent of the quarry was able to paddle about in it in a canoe.

Saving the Pier

Other similar plants have proved equally successful. At El Segundo, in California, where there was a pier 4000 feet long, half of it was washed away one night in a storm. Mr. Brasher, whose help was sought, installed a pneumatic breakwater, and when the next terrific storm, lasting nearly 24 hours, did much damage up and down the coast, this place was saved by the bubbles which broke the force and continuity of the waves. Yet the running of the air compressor involved an expenditure of only £12.

The temporary installation at El Segundo has since been replaced by an air well 700 ft. long at a cost of £10,000, the cheapest and most effective breakwater of its size that could be devised.

Probably, in the course of time, these compressed air barriers will replace rock and concrete breakwaters in all the most exposed positions.

STORM-MAKING

Odd Scenes in an Old Brewery

ELECTRIC ATMOSPHERE FOR MUSHROOMS

A brewery in New York, now that it no longer makes and sells beer, under Prohibition is being used by its owner for the much better purpose of producing mushrooms.

It has been found that a brewery is a very suitable place for cultivating these delicacies, as there is a close relationship between the yeast cells used in making beer and the cells which produce the mushroom spawn. The ordinary brewing plant and equipment can be used for growing the mushrooms, the only alteration necessary being the substitution of growing frames for the beer vats.

It has been observed that mushrooms grow much faster after a thunderstorm, and experiments have therefore been made in the brewery in reproducing a stormy atmosphere.

First a dense fog is made by means of steam and the freezing plant, until the beds are saturated with moisture; then the air is dried and a machine employed to discharge electric currents, corresponding to lightning.

This method, it is said, not only hastens the growth of the mushrooms, but increases their size.

A WISE MAN'S BOOK

Nature and Her Wonders

Secrets of Earth and Sea. By Sir Ray Lankester. Methuen. 8s. 6d.

Sir Ray Lankester is one of the cleverest popularisers of scientific knowledge, and he appears at his best in the 22 chapters that make up this book.

The first three chapters tell of the drawings made by the earliest races of mankind, and they are amply illustrated, as, indeed, are all the chapters that can be made clearer by illustration.

The book covers a very wide range of knowledge, from the gigantic beasts of antiquity to ancient and modern charms for good luck, and the writing, whatever the subject dealt with, is thoughtful, bright, and clear.

MR. TIN TACK

C.N. at His School in Burma

Some time ago we mentioned the fact that a good reader of the C.N. was prepared to give away five hundred copies of a book, and our friend now tells us that the response was extraordinary.

She was absolutely snowed under by applications for the book, and had the greatest difficulty in getting them all read and examined.

They came from all quarters of the globe, and are still coming in; the last was from a Burmese schoolmaster with the quaint name of Tin Tack.

Our greetings to him and his school; we hope to hear from him one day.

ELECTRIC GROCER'S SHOP

What Next?

There is a grocer's shop in Colorado where electricity does all the work!

The grocer has merely to switch on the electric current, when the bins will open by themselves, the scales will weigh the amount required, and a device will hold a bag ready for the purchase to be put in.

When the scales balance exactly the current is automatically shut off, and all the grocer has to do is to take the customer's money.

GIANTS NOT WANTED

NATURE HAS NO USE FOR THEM

The Tallest Men in All the World

BRAINS VERSUS MATTER

By Our Natural Historian

The world has no use for giants, but Dr. William Robertson, writing in one of our learned journals, says that healthy giants might arise. It is very unlikely that the general body of scientists will agree with him.

The discovery of radium and its marvellous properties enables geologists to show that the earth, once supposed to be of comparatively recent origin, is at least a hundred million years old; and the more we search back into the past the more do we find it necessary to extend the period in which man has been developing from lowly origins to his present standard. Mankind is immensely ancient.

Men Who Went on Growing

Nature has made many races of giants, but never gigantic races of men. There is scarcely an order in the animal world which has not had its Titans—reptiles of all sorts, fishes, amphibians, tigers, bears, rhinoceroses, hippopotamuses, mastodons, camels, sloths, and, of course, birds. They all had their giant eras, but *every giant failed*. Whales and elephants are specialised survivors, but they are doomed; the rhino and the hippo, smaller than their ancestors, have no great future. Nature let those creatures that inclined to increasing bulk take their way to extinction. She saved the smaller kinds and worked on them.

But a race of human giants she never did create, and it is unlikely that she ever will. Isolated giants have arisen from time to time in various parts of the world, men measuring up to nine feet in height, but their abnormal stature was the product of disease, not of health and vigour. The excessive flow of certain glands caused these men to go on helplessly growing.

Tall Men of Scotland

Dr. Robertson writes of a man of 20 who, still growing, already measures 7 feet 8 inches in height. He is perfectly healthy, with none of the disastrous symptoms which generally attend giant growth in human beings; but one healthy giant does not make a case for a race of giants, though the doctor thinks such a type might grow up.

All the evidence is against it. The Patagonians are generally supposed to be the tallest race on earth, and their height averages 5 feet 10 inches; but we are told there are taller men than the Patagonians, the Scotsmen of Balmaclellan, in Kirkcudbright, whose average height works out at a fraction under 5 feet 10½ inches. That is a splendid stature, of course; but how many such men are there in Balmaclellan's little village population?

The Growing Brain

Probably if we could but get into the secret homes of the gorillas we should find that Nature has tried giantism among those man-like wonders. Reports come from time to time of gorillas seven feet, eight feet, and more in height, and probably casual travellers have not seen the largest of the species.

Gorillas have a better chance than men of producing giants, man's mightiest development occurring in his brain. A baby gorilla has nearly as large a brain as a human baby, but its brain only doubles in growth, while the human brain increases five times. It is because a healthy man specialises in brain development that he does not grow to a giant.

Giants do not last well. The little man can tire them out at work or play, and long outlive them. Had gigantic men been desirable, the world would have had races of them ages ago.

THE WEEK IN HISTORY

FAMOUS AMERICAN STORYTELLER

Strange Career of a Brilliant Irishman

A CHAMPION OF FREEDOM

July 3. Battle of Sadowa, or Koeniggratz . . 1866
4. Nathaniel Hawthorne born, Salem, U.S.A. 1804
5. Mrs. Siddons born at Brecon 1755
6. Sir Thomas More beheaded, London . . . 1535
7. Sheridan died in London. 1816
8. La Fontaine born in Champagne 1621
9. Edmund Burke died at Beaconsfield 1797

Nathaniel Hawthorne

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE won slowly a more solid reputation in Europe as a novelist than any other American.

He sprang from stern Puritan English stock, and his ancestry determined the tone of his best books for grown-up readers. Though finely written, they are grim. But his fanciful stories for children are delightful.

The earliest settlers of the Hawthorne family lived in wooded solitudes, and Nathaniel was a solitary thinker amid country scenes, shy, and reserved.

Fame came to him slowly through periods of poverty.

Late in life Hawthorne was appointed American Consul at Liverpool, and proved himself a wise friend of England. Excusing his shyness, he whimsically declared that he consoled himself when he had to meet strangers by thinking of the enormous number of people in the world whom he did not have to meet.

Sheridan

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN, dramatist and politician, the most brilliant Irishman at the close of the eighteenth century, was the son of an actor.

After being educated at Harrow he passed quickly to success.

At twenty-three he had written The Rivals, one of his most successful plays, at twenty-five was manager of Drury Lane Theatre, and at twenty-seven its proprietor. Before he was twenty-eight he had produced The School for Scandal, which has held its place on the English stage more firmly than any comedy written since Shakespeare.

Turning to politics, he became an M.P. at twenty-nine, and was Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs at thirty. But this brilliant success by a sparkling man was not sustained by industry and a sense of responsibility. When Sheridan exerted himself he could enthral the House of Commons by his eloquence: but, though he was a member for 33 years, he never attained high office.

Edmund Burke

EDMUND BURKE was the greatest political thinker Ireland has ever produced.

Educated in Dublin, he crossed to London to study law, but adopted journalism and politics as his professions, and lived in England to the end of his life.

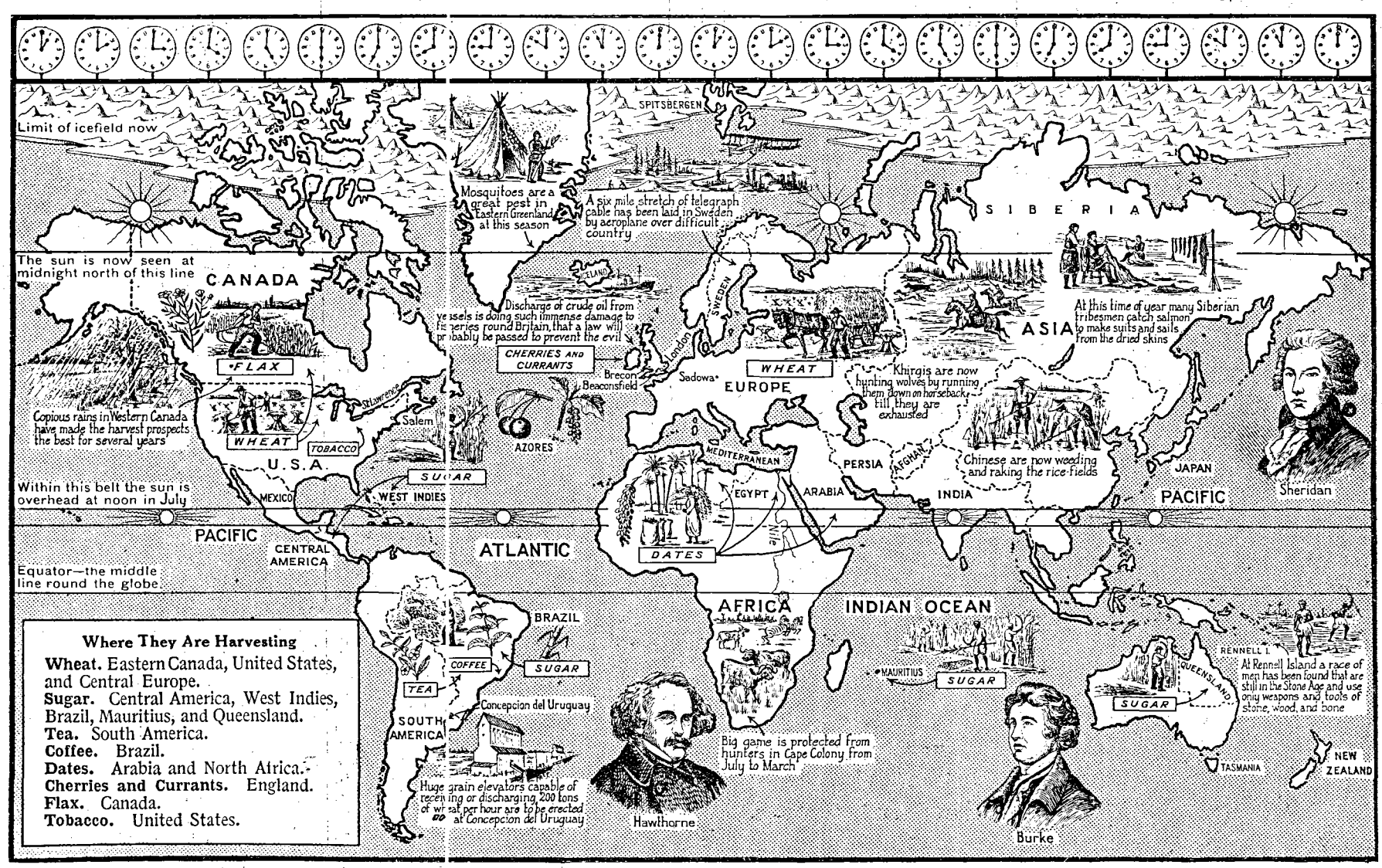
First he gained fame as a writer and brilliant talker in the circle where Johnson, Goldsmith, Gibbon, Garrick, and Reynolds were friends. His early book on The Sublime and the Beautiful is a classic.

After serving as private secretary to leading politicians he entered Parliament in 1765, and sat till 1794. Though Burke was one of our greatest orators and a profound politician he seldom held office, for he was too independent to be bound long by Party ties. He was a champion of freedom with order.

He powerfully opposed the taxation which lost us the American Colonies, supported fair dealings with Ireland, defended the inhabitants of India against the corrupt government of Warren Hastings, and helped to rouse Europe against the violence of the French Revolution. Many of his warnings were prophetic, for, under the changeful ebb and flow of politics, Burke always tried to discover lasting principles of justice, and to be wise for all time rather than be carried away by the folly of the hour.

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PICTURE-NEWS & TIME MAP SHOWING HARVESTS ALL OVER THE WORLD



HOW A MAN WAS FOUND

A Very Curious Story

ODD MEETING IN A LITTLE SHOP

One of the big magazine sensations about twenty years ago was the amazing stories of adventure written by a man who called himself Louis de Rougemont. He was an impostor, and he has lately died in a London workhouse; but in those days many people believed in him, and his story was widely accepted. He was even allowed to address the British Association.

But a clever London editor refused to believe in this man. He wired out to Australia asking for information, and a reporter in Sydney went out in search of the facts about de Rougemont.

One day, as the reporter was giving up his search with nothing to report after all his trouble, he came wearily up to a newsagent's shop in which the magazine with de Rougemont's story was for sale. There were copies in the window showing his portrait.

But the newsagent knew nothing of de Rougement, and the reporter was just leaving when a little girl of ten came in and asked if she might look at the picture magazine in the window. The newsagent let her look, and the little lady said: "I am sure this is the picture of my father. His name is Grin."

And so it was. Grin was found out, and a great public hoax was exposed. But for that timely meeting in the little shop at the other side of the earth, when two people interested in the same thing came together at the same moment, nobody knows how long the world might have believed in de Rougemont.

Pronunciations in this Paper

Cuzco	**Koos**-ko
Hussein	Hoo-**sine**
Ingres	**An**-gr
Kirkcudbright	Ker-**koo**-bre
Masai	Mah-**si**
Montauban	Mon-to-**bahn**
Sadowa	**Sah**-do-vah

ARAB KINGDOMS

Settling Down in the Near East

After two years of confusion and disorder it is hoped that the Arabs in the Middle East will soon become settled in their own kingdoms.

Already the Arab kingdom of Arabia is established under King Hussein; now, under the guidance of the British Resident, Sir Percy Cox, an Arab kingdom is to be set up in Mesopotamia, the people electing their own king. It is hoped they will choose the Emir Feisul.

BIG MOTOR STATION

Road Travel from London

An enormous central station for motor charabancs is to be built in the heart of London. It is to have a glass roof, and its four broad platforms will enable 28 big coaches to load at once.

On the main platform will be waiting-rooms, refreshment-rooms, and booking-offices, luggage and parcels departments, and all the conveniences of a big station.

Quite clearly we are on the eve of a big change in travelling conditions, and we may look forward to the time when the travelling public will be withdrawn from the railways for at least three-quarters of the year.

HEART THAT STOPPED BEATING

And Started Again

By Our Medical Correspondent

A few days ago, at a hospital at Newark, in the United States, a patient's heart stopped during an operation, and the surgeon managed to set it going again by massaging it.

This seems a very daring and wonderful thing to do, but the human heart has been massaged several times before under similar circumstances; and in several cases wounds in the heart have actually been sewn up, and the patient has recovered.

WIRELESS FEATS

Wonderful Things Lately Done

The entire music of the opera "Madame Butterfly" was transmitted by wireless telephone from the Opera House in Berlin to all the big wireless stations on the Continent. It is believed that the opera was heard distinctly throughout a radius of 800 miles.

A wireless receiving apparatus has been erected at Perth Observatory, in Western Australia, with power to send wireless waves right across the earth. A tap made by the operator at Perth is heard instantaneously at the other side of the world.

As General Smuts came through the Bay of Biscay on his way to the Imperial Conference men in London spoke to him by wireless telephone, giving him the news of the day, invitations to dinner, and fraternal greetings.

SAVED BY A LOAF

Curious Story from Silesia

During the recent disturbances in Upper Silesia a party of armed Poles attempted to enter the town of Korel, which was garrisoned by Italian troops acting under the Allied Commission.

When the first group of insurgents approached and tried to cross the bridge over the River Oder, the Italian sentinel opened fire. The Poles replied vigorously, and would soon have made good their entrance if it had not occurred to the soldier to seize his army loaf and hurl it at his assailants.

This unexpected proceeding so startled them that they fled in terror, no doubt imagining this large, shapeless projectile to be some new form of bomb! By the time they had recovered their nerve the arrival of reinforcements had saved the situation.

SETTING A RIVER ON FIRE

Amazing Scene Near Bath

BAKED APPLES HANGING ON THE TREES

An amazing incident has occurred in the West of England, and the old suggestion of setting the Thames on fire is evidently not such an impossible proceeding as it seems.

The River Avon, at West Tiverton, near Bath, was recently turned into a river of fire, flames rising nearly 50 feet and doing much damage to vegetation along the banks.

For two or three days a thick coating of oil had been noticed floating on the water of the river, though where this oil came from nobody knows.

A gardener was burning some rubbish in a garden that runs down to the river when some sparks were carried by the wind on to the oil and set it blazing.

In a moment the whole river was a sheet of roaring flame, and this spread with alarming rapidity, destroying a punt that was moored to the bank, damaging many trees, and baking the young apples that hung on some of the branches. Currant bushes were shrivelled up, and a patch of potatoes ruined.

The local firemen and a band of volunteer helpers managed to save the buildings on the banks of the river, and after a time the fire burned itself out.

THE WORLD'S OIL

And Where It Comes From

The use of oil as fuel is becoming more and more important to industry, and it is interesting to note that the output of petroleum is increasing rapidly.

In 1920 the world's production of oil was over 688 million barrels, nearly a quarter as much again as in 1919.

The largest proportion of oil came from the United States, the next from Mexico, and the smallest from Italy.

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CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPER
JULY 2 ❀ ❀ 1921

The Sack Race

ONCE upon a time there was a wise old man in Italy who said, "Nothing can come out of a sack that is not in it," and his saying went round the world.

But the world grows old, and people forget, and now we are trying to take out of the world's sack what is not in it. We run to it with paper money in our hands hoping to find there meat and clothes, but instead we find more paper money. But you might have millions in paper and die of starvation. Paper money is not wealth.

Then what we have to do with the world's sack, if we wish to take food and clothes out of it, is to fill it with things that other people will take in exchange for food and clothes. That is the only way in which we can live. There is no other.

The world's sack is now almost empty. For nearly five years we filled it with little else than destruction. Instead of putting in ploughs and reaping machines we stuffed it full with guns. A plough creates more wealth; a gun blows all the wealth it can reach out of existence. No wonder the world's sack is empty.

But the sack will be filled, for men must live. The question we have to ask ourselves in England now is this: What part are we playing to fill the world's sack? There is a regular race to fill it. Germany is working night and day to fill the world's sack with her merchandise; so is Belgium, so is Sweden, so is Italy, so is America, so is Japan. They remember what the old Italian taught the world years ago. But we—what are we doing?

One of our correspondents tells us of a foundry in the North of England where sparrows are building their nests in the roofs and starlings in the chimneys. He has walked through miles and miles of workshops where you could hear a pin drop. He has visited towns filled with men doing nothing, and has passed through a countryside where miners were lying on their backs in the fields. During the last five months our exports have diminished by 263 million pounds. Why ask, then, what England is doing to fill the world's sack!

What do we expect to get out of the sack? *If we put nothing in we shall get nothing out.* No country will send us food. No country will send us the raw materials for our workmen to manufacture into wealth. We shall sink to a small people and live like savages. Is it not time we threw off our coat, rolled up our sleeves, and set out to fill the sack with British merchandise?

In every school throughout the land this lesson should be taught early and late: *Nothing comes out of a sack that is not in it.*



THE EDITOR'S TABLE



❀ ❀ Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London

above the hidden waters of the ancient River Fleet, the cradle of the Journalism of the world

A Comradeship Tax

A GREAT firm in the North of England has had to discharge seven hundred men from its foundry owing to the coal stoppage. This foundry employed a thousand men, so that only three hundred were left to carry on.

A meeting was called of these men, and one of them rose and proposed that they should each give a shilling a week out of their wages to help to support their unlucky mates.

No one dissented from this proposal, but a man rose and said he thought sixpence each would be enough. At this there rose a cry of "Shame!" and the meeting decided without any argument and with a great enthusiasm to tax themselves a shilling a week for the sake of comradeship.

So long as such a spirit as this exists in England we have it in our power to conquer all our difficulties. But this spirit must extend itself to take in the whole nation.

❀



Spell It

From all the world a great flow of people is turning to America as the Promised Land

❀

Wanted, a Dog Fight

THE other day Lady Curzon opened her fine house in Carlton House Terrace to a meeting of the League of Health. Only a few people turned up. The meeting was a frost.

Among the speakers was Sir Bruce Bruce-Porter, who made so splendid a success of the Third London General Hospital during the war. He went through his speech like a man, hammering in the terrible facts we have learned about the nation's health.

Then he looked at the audience, and said bitterly that no doubt if a dog-fight had been advertised to take place in Carlton House Terrace there would have been a big crowd there.

What an indictment! Those who should be leading the nation in ideas, and in work, and in serious efforts to make England a great and noble country, flock in their thousands to race meetings, prize-fights, and polo matches, but will not cross the road to help the nation's health.

Everywhere

IT is a long time since a British Prime Minister complained of a preacher who dared to suggest that religion should invade the sacred region of private life; and now our Prime Minister suggests that religion should be cautious in invading public life.

But where does religion come in if not in private or in public life? We think both our Prime Ministers were wrong. The proper place of religion is surely everywhere.

❀

Tip-Cat

SIR JAMES CANTLIE thinks "old age is just a pose." One that can only be taken, as photographers say, by a time exposure.

⊡

HIGH AIMS: What every amateur contralto shoots at—Clara Butt.

⊡

REAL movies: Pantechnicons.

⊡

"ONE does exaggerate a little sometimes," remarks Sir C. Townshend. He wasn't doing it when he said that.

⊡

"THE new poor," according to a grown-up paper, "will need to be clever." Not to be poor, surely?

⊡

LADY BANISTER FLETCHER thinks women should make excellent architects. Would they then be known as designing women?

⊡

THERE is a boom in perfumery. Fortune hunters are already on the scent.

⊡

WAXWORKS: Bee hives.

⊡

SOMEBODY says property owners do not draw wages. They do, but they are other people's wages.

⊡

"THE education rate," according to Sir A. Sprot, "is what weighs us down." And education is what weighs us up.

⊡

DICTIONARY for school examiners:

A questionable affair: The examination paper.

A good mark: A stroke of luck.

Men with some go in them: Those who pass.

Picked men: Plucked ones.



PETER PUCK WANTS TO KNOW

If Cleopatra sewed with Cleopatra's Needle

❀

A Great Statesman to the People

I had rather we should devolve our strength to you than that the kingdom, for our division, should suffer loss; for it is in all our hearts to profess, above anything in the world, the public good of the people.

If that be in our hearts, truly and nakedly, I am confident it is a principle that will stand. Perhaps God may unite us and carry us both one way.

CROMWELL, in a crisis

Peter Puck Starts Thinking

People and Monkeys

ONE of the cleverest foreigners who ever came to live among us complained that we live wholly in the realm of the cut-and-dried.

He gave an example of a conversation. "Have you ever been to Florence?" "Oh, yes!" "Isn't it a most interesting city?" "Oh, yes! I think it's so very nice." "Have you read Romola?" "Oh, yes!" "I suppose you admire it?" "Oh, yes! I think it so very clever."

He said that our people are not truthfully interested in great or beautiful things. They are copyists. They follow a fashion. They have no deep inward life of their own.

Well, it may be true; but what this foreigner said of our people of fashion is true of both sexes and all ages. One schoolboy is very like another schoolboy, and one schoolgirl is the very pattern of another.

The fact is that we are all starving our personality. We are ceasing to be human beings and are descending towards monkeydom. We think too much of the mould, and too little of the metal that goes into it.

There is only one remedy. *We must be absolutely truthful with ourselves.* We must love beauty and goodness and our fellow-creatures, not because it is a fashion but because it is the only way of progress. We must never pretend, and never give ourselves airs. We must never lie to ourselves. We must feed our soul with truth. We must really and truly hunger after excellence.

❀

Pleasant Things Just Done

A PIECE of silver plate has been given by the Board of Trade to Captain Omar Humphrey for helping shipwrecked passengers on Great Nicobar Island in October 1919.

* * *

A BEAUTIFUL pair of iron gates, 300 years old, have been sent by the family of Lord Redesdale to be set up at a war cemetery on the road into Ypres in memory of Lord Redesdale's eldest son.

* * *

TWO sparrows have hatched their little ones in a nest on the top of an electric arc-lamp in one of the busiest streets of Dundee.

* * *

THE gates to the happy paradise of Kensington Gardens have been thrown open to the children and nursemaids once again, the soldiers having gone.

* * *

A RICH knight from Australia walked into an ironmonger's shop in Hackney Road, not long ago, looked round the place he had left fifty years before, waited for the customers to leave, and then said to the man at the counter: "Well, and how is my brother Jim?" It was Sir Joynton Smith, back from Australia after half a century, and back with a fortune.

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OLD THAMES IS RUNNING DRY

THE DANGER TO LONDON'S GREAT RIVER

Consequences of the Long, Long Drought

THE HIDDEN WATERS

Though the weather should change and rain come down like bursting clouds, the long drought has brought us face to face with a danger and a wonder. The Thames has been running dry.

Dry is a comparative term, of course; the river would still go on tinkling over its pebbly course for many a month if no more rain fell, but it would cease to serve as a water supply for London and as the surface over which fleets of laden argosies ply to and from the sea. The fact is that the rainfall has been deficient for something like eighteen months, and Father Thames finds his resources depleted. He has been living on capital, not on income.

The Things Unseen

The Thames is not like a river rising in mountains where snow lies and melts eternally. He draws his wealth from rain, snow, and mist, disposing of these as they reach his ancient bed. Yet, though we have long periods of rainless days and nights, he flows tranquil and abundant, a river rising and waxing mighty from no visible source.

With this river it is as in human affairs: the things unseen are greater than the things seen. The rains that fall in the gathering grounds of the Thames do not all come at once to the river. We save up for a rainy day; Nature saves up for dry days.

The bulk of the water descending on our land goes down. It soaks into the earth, through the soil, through the rocks and chalk. The land is as a great hard, unyielding sponge, soaked with water. Thousands of unseen inlets admit water into the ground, which becomes a concealed storage basin for the kindly rains from heaven.

Where Waters Spring Forth

That water returns to us in the form of springs. It may issue simply because there is an outlet at a point lower than that at which it entered; it may be forced forth by pressure. It may issue pure and unsullied, delicate to the palate; it may come to light charged with iron and mineral salts, caught up from the rocks through which it has passed. But whatever the course and conduct of the water that goes in, that water surely returns to us after many days.

That is how the Thames is fed in drought. But even springs dry up when they have surrendered their store and there come no new rains; and that is what has been happening. The streams lying nearest the surface are exhausted; we are living on those that reach down to lower levels.

The Need of the River

We are not to suppose that the river will cease utterly—that is impossible. There was once a practically rainless eighteen months over the catchment area of the little River Wandle, yet so wonderful was the reserve of water in the 51 square miles of chalk on the South Downs drained by the Wandle that the river poured forth its ten million gallons of precious water daily during all that drought. The Thames could do better than that, for his outflow is reckoned in hundreds of millions of gallons a day.

In a year of average rainfall, say 27 inches, the Thames pours 1250 million gallons of water through the arches of Kingston Bridge every day of the year. But he must have his average rainfall to maintain that supply from the springs. That supply has not been maintained, and the Thames is athirst; his balance at the bank is reduced and is in need of months of steady reinforcement. That is the problem with which the long drought has now confronted us.

NEWS FROM EVERYWHERE

A cheap milk shop has been opened at Deal for selling milk at 6½d. a quart.

The Silent M.P.

A man has just died in Berlin who was a member of the German parliament for 44 years and never made a speech.

The Scout's Uniform

A Bill has been introduced into Parliament to prevent abuse of the name, uniform, or badges of the Boy Scouts.

The Unburstable Ball

A rubber ball that does not burst is among the recent inventions. It is packed with sponge, and can be stabbed with a knife without any harm to it.

Egg-Laying Extraordinary

A North Devon boy reports that in October last his brother bought two Indian runner ducks, costing 11s. 8d. the pair. In the same month they began to lay, and up to May 10 laid 316 eggs. They have no warm food.

Lyons's catering shops made a profit of half a million pounds last year.

Berlin's Big Bell

The largest bell in Berlin Cathedral has suddenly cracked right across. It is 450 years old this year.

Shooting the Fox

In Perthshire foxes are being shot and trapped by gamekeepers owing to the damage they do to lambs and game.

Where R. L. S. Sleeps

New Zealand has prohibited the Drink Traffic in Samoa, which she rules under a mandate from the League of Nations. It is here that Robert Louis Stevenson lies in his hilltop grave.

Caught by the Camera

Two men photographed in a London studio were seen to steal some money from the till on passing through the shop. The lady photographer developed the negative quickly, took the photograph to the police, and the men were arrested.

BIG JUMP BY A WORLD CHAMPION



The World's Olympic Champion, P. Hodges, shows how to clear a hurdle in fine style

BLACK COUNTRY'S CURTAIN LIFTED

THE population of the Black Country has been learning the truth that good may come out of things evil.

During the long period of the coal stoppage, and the consequent cessation of many forms of industry, the people there have witnessed a revelation of the country round about them so wonderful and complete that it seemed as though a great dingy curtain had been lifted in a transformation scene, to show, afar off, tree-clad hills and beacons, and horizons of wooded country never before visible.

Nowhere has the effect of the smokeless atmosphere of the past few weeks been so striking as in the Black Country.

For two centuries or more this area, the smokiest, sootiest district in the whole of Britain, has been shrouded with a continuous pall of smoke, black, yellow, brown and green, that has been poured forth from hundreds of chimneys, furnaces, ovens, and kilns. In this heavily smoke-laden air, through which rain will fall like ink, generations have been born, have lived and died without seeing the true beauty of sunset, the blue skies, or the starry heavens.

Now at last they have seen these things, for the absence of coal has paralysed the mighty operations of industry in the Black Country as elsewhere, and smoke has disappeared as though a magic hand had wafted it away. The people have breathed pure air.

And in another way the coal stoppage has turned out to be a not unmixed evil for the people of the Black Country.

It has led to the disappearance of many of those desolate objects, the slag-heaps, estimated to cover 30,000 acres. These heaps consist mostly of rough coal and slack, thrown out when the mines were first started. When supplies of coal ceased people went in scores to the slag-heaps and dug for fuel, which they carted away in tons. Thus many heaps have been levelled to the ground.

QUEER ORDER FROM RUSSIA

SPECTACLES FOR CATTLE

Blindness from the Dazzling Glare of the Snows

ARMY THAT LOST ITS SIGHT

A great deal of surprise was created the other day when a long list of goods required by Russia was found to contain an order for spectacles for cows.

Surely this must be a joke, said the business men, or someone must have blundered in writing the word cows, for spectacles could certainly not be needed for animals.

But there was no mistake. Cows on the Russian steppes have long worn spectacles to protect their eyes from the glare of the snow, which stretches for hundreds of miles on all sides till late spring, and sets up a serious affection that may result in total blindness.

An Englishman's Invention

Snow blindness is no new complaint. There are many instances of it in history. The glare of the sun shining on the snow first of all causes a pricking pain; then there is a sensation of grit under the eyelids; light of any kind becomes extremely painful, and the sight begins to go. If the matter is not attended to the eyelids swell and the vision may remain impaired for months.

On the vast steppes of Russia the cattle that graze during the early spring, when the ground for hundreds of miles is glistening white, are greatly troubled with snow blindness; but several years ago an Englishman invented a special form of spectacles with brown glass which could be fastened round the horns of cattle with leather straps.

Eskimos Make Spectacles

Quite a thriving business grew up in the manufacture of these spectacles, but the war put a stop to it, and the cattle suffered severely. Now Russia is anxious to adopt the remedy once more.

Mountain climbers and Arctic explorers always have to wear blue or green glasses when in the snow-clad regions, and any neglect to do this may lead to serious trouble.

No amount of familiarity or usage gives immunity, even to people whose ancestors have lived amid the snows for centuries. The Eskimos have long made snow spectacles in a very crude form from drift-wood. This is cut to the curvature of the face; a notch serves as a bridge for the nose, and in each of the discs that cover the eyes, where the wood is about two inches thick, a narrow slit, about the width of a thin saw-cut, is made. Through the slits the light passes to the eyes sufficiently diminished to prevent snow-blindness.

An Army Goes Astray

Nansen used these Eskimo snow spectacles in Greenland and found them very good, as the absence of glass prevented the obscuring of the sight by the condensation of moisture on the lenses. Captain Parry, an earlier Arctic explorer, and his men also wore native snow spectacles. On one occasion, when a party of men set out from Parry's boat without this protection, every man was struck with blindness, and no one was able to direct the sledge.

Large bodies of men have sometimes been affected by snow blindness. In Peru a whole division of the army marching from Cuzco to Pano became blind, and a hundred guides had to be summoned to lead them to their destination. Many of the afflicted men wandered away and fell over precipices. In 1793 in the Alps bodies of Piedmontese troops were similarly incapacitated.

But the lesson has now been learned, and modern travellers in snowy regions invariably wear coloured spectacles, and, thanks to English enterprise, which has done so much to foster kindness to animals, the lower creatures are similarly protected.

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NOTES FROM A SCHOOL IN SIAM

Queer Glimpses of Life

THE WAYS OF ANTS, BATS, AND LIZARDS

By a Correspondent in Siam

A school teacher at Chiengmai, in Siam, sends us these notes of what he calls "peculiar things" in that progressive Eastern land.

The other day I noticed an account of a man blindfolding bats, and then stringing wires across the room, which the bats avoided though they could not see. But the bats here are not so wise or sensitive to the presence of obstructions, for often as we sit in the porch after dark we can hear them hit the telephone wire with a noise as sharp as if it had been struck with a stick.

We have a lizard here from six to ten inches long that we call the tooktoe because that is the sound it produces at night. It can run up walls or across ceilings. Sparrows under the eaves are a terrible nuisance, but if the tooktoe takes possession the sparrows quit.

One of our ants, large and red, is called the sour ant because of its smell when crushed. It does not sting, but it has very strong jaws, and if it once takes hold of anything you cannot get it loose. If you pull it hard enough the head comes off, but the jaws still hold the object tight.

If you touch the ground where these ants are marching the soldier ants will at once run forward and attack in mass formation.

The Siamese consider the eggs of these ants a great delicacy, and climb the trees to rob the nests, for the ants live up the trees, where their nests are made by sticking the edges of leaves together with a substance that exudes from the ant's mouth. The nests are sometimes 18 inches in diameter.

Another ant, making its nest in the tops of the bamboo by weaving bamboo leaves together with a sort of paper made by it out of bamboo wood, will keep a fowl-house clear from fleas and other vermin if a nest be put in the house.

THE WISE MAN AND THE FLEA

How Far Does a Flea Jump?

From a Professor's Chair

According to an old story the length a flea can jump was measured by Socrates, one of the wisest of the Greek philosophers. It is indeed a feat which might excite a wise man's wonder.

In a vertical direction a flea can raise its body about eight inches into the air, a distance about a hundred times its own length. In a horizontal direction it can jump about thirteen inches, which is over a hundred and sixty times its own length. It has been calculated that if a lion had the same proportion of strength to the size of its body that a flea shows it could leap two-thirds of a mile!

In an interesting lecture to the Photo-micrographic Society in London the President, Dr. G. H. Rodman, pointed out that if a man had proportionately the same jumping powers as a flea he could, from a starting-point on the pavement surrounding St. Paul's Cathedral, make on hop to the cross at its summit. With a second skip he would reach the top of the Monument on Fish Street Hill. The next jump would land him in the London Bridge station of the Brighton Railway.

This sounds ludicrous in reference to man, but the proportions are right for a flea's jumps. The flea's hind legs are much more strongly built than the front and middle ones, and the jump is due to a sudden contraction of their muscles. It is not far off the mark—though a little bit—to compare the muscles of the body to internal combustion engines. The flea's jump is almost like an explosion of one of these engines.

The Man who Loved the Animals

WHY HE IS REMEMBERED AFTER 300 YEARS

La Fontaine Day for the Boys and Girls of Our Neighbour France

A COUNTRY BOY AND HIS LITTLE TALES

BY OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT

France is thinking now of one of the famous men whom all its little ones know by name, the story-teller La Fontaine.

The great French philosopher Taine comes to mind as one thinks of him, for one of the things Taine said was this—"Our life is a clean sheet of linen, on which, at long intervals, a little daintily-painted flower is perceived, and the only one to be envied is he who can show on his woof many flowers."

Does not this idea come to us when thinking of La Fontaine, who certainly more than most had "many flowers on his linen"?

Who was this happy man, and why do the French keep this month the third centenary of his birth?

How the Fables Grew Up

He was Jean de la Fontaine, a Frenchman, born in the great time of Louis XIII—on July 8, 1621. His father being Master of the Waters and Forests at Château Thierry, the child was very early used to country things, and grew up loving them. So there was developed in him a passion for animals, a passion that later on determined the manner of his life—not as a naturalist, like Fabre, but as a popular moralist.

La Fontaine was a poet; in other words, he was a man who could transform himself into all sorts of beings and things, a faculty that was given so generously to Shakespeare with his "myriad mind." La Fontaine used his gift in writing fables. A man comes home in the evening and tells his people about what he has seen in the day—such is the origin of these fables, each one the picture of something La Fontaine had observed during the day, so that these little pictures are like so many sketches of society in the seventeenth century.

Learning from the Animals

Court folk, middle-class folk, and countrymen were mostly represented by animals—the writer's friends. If any French philosopher at that time had been asked: "What is a dog? a fly? a tree?" he would have answered: "A machine"; only La Fontaine gave the animals souls, ideas, purposes. When in the country he would spend nearly all his time among them, admiring them, studying their thoughts, caring for their meals. Here was a donkey in a meadow with no thistles. What could he do to help it?

One day when our poet was to go to dinner with a friend he arrived late at night, and as everyone anxiously hastened to welcome him he explained: "I amused myself by following an ant's funeral to its grave, and when it was over I thought it nicer to accompany the people of the family back to their hole!"

Do we wonder, after this, at La Fontaine's choice for the characters in his fables, or at their exactness? Every reader knows the part each creature plays: the noble and powerful lion is a king; the richly-dressed, nimble, cunning fox is a courtier; the flattering cat represents the hypocrite (would he not be taken for the kindest of men if his lips did not sometimes uncover two rows of sharp teeth?); the bear is a country lord; the monkey is an agile, noisy charlatan, a public jester who does not care if he tells the truth or not.

And all of them teach us something. Let us take one of the best-known fables, of the lion and the rat.

A rat blundered between a lion's paws. The king of animals showed himself a king indeed, and let the little one live. His kindness was not lost. Would anyone have expected the lion to need the help of a rat? Yet it happened, for coming out of the forests the lion was caught fast in a net, out of which he could not escape in spite of his rage. Sir Rat hastened up and gnawed into the net with his teeth until the great lion was free.

A World for Dreamers

So, in a very few words, the author finds the way to show us two things: first, that we must never scorn anyone, however small and lowly, because the smallest and weakest may be often needed; second, that patience and time can do more than strength and rage. Let us think of it sometimes.

Not only animals but plants, stones, and clouds have a place in La Fontaine's comedy of a hundred acts, as he called his collection of a hundred fables. His fables are real masquerades, and his disguise of people as things cheers up any subject.

So our artist lived in a charming world open only to dreamers; the blessed gift of illusion transformed all things for him. Happy the soul who is able to feel these heavenly moments, these emotions, the best and most beautiful of a man's life!

The Homer of France

And so the bonhomme La Fontaine, as he was called by his friends, was like a child all his life, like a credulous, natural, forgetful child. His friends used to take care of him. One old lady, a writer friend, received him for twenty years, and when she died another friend, M. d'Hervart, came to ask La Fontaine to join his home. Never has the answer of La Fontaine been forgotten.

"*I was going to,*" he said. Thereupon Mme. d'Hervart adopted him as a son. It is related that one day some of the great man's friends, having met him with new clothes on, congratulated him on his choice; but he was surprised, not having noticed it! It was Mme. d'Hervart who had changed his suit, saying nothing!

However, La Fontaine's absent-mindedness has been very much exaggerated, for his work reveals the fact that he was a keen observer. He spent the last years of his life away from the world, meditating, praying to God, loving and watching his animal friends; and his end was calm and noble.

France celebrates his third centenary on July 8. Let us have a thought on that day for this writer of so many simple stories, this man who has been called the Homer of France.

SCHOOLBOY AND HIS WATCH

How it was Lost and Found

REMARKABLE STORY OF A FARM IN SOMERSET

Our account of the picking up of a watch by a bird has brought us a story of a remarkable loss and recovery of a watch and chain. The story is vouched for as strictly true by a lady reader of the C.N. in the West of England, a cousin of the owner of the watch.

Some years ago a boarder in a Somerset school discovered that his watch and chain were missing. As far as he remembered, he had left them in his waistcoat pocket in his bedroom, but he was not sure; and, schoolboy-like, he had made no fuss about it, but looked upon it simply as a misfortune.

Some years later a farmer living not far from the school, on going to give his cattle some fodder, was amazed to see a silver watch and chain in the manger. However, it takes a good deal to excite a Somersetshire farmer, and, taking the articles calmly into the house, he placed them carefully on a high shelf for safety, and forgot all about them.

Some time later, when the farmer's wife was spring-cleaning, she came upon them on the shelf, and, investigating farther, looked inside the case and found the name and address of the owner scratched with a pin.

Thereupon, at the first opportunity, she set out for the village named, some miles away, found the youth, and handed over to him his watch and chain—to his very great surprise, for by this time he had almost forgotten that he ever had the watch. Both watch and chain were in splendid condition.

The only explanation of the strange adventures of the watch seems to be that the boy must have been wearing the watch and chain on a walk or a cross-country run through a hayfield after the grass was cut, and must have jerked them out of his pocket. The farmer must have collected them unawares with the hay and put them into the rick, where they remained several years before being cut out and carried to the manger with a bundle of hay.

The watch and chain are still in daily use, and the watch keeps excellent time. We hope it will beat out the moments in the life of its owner for many happy years to come.

GOOD WORK ANYONE CAN DO

Something for the Autumn

If any boys or girls are wondering what useful work they can do during the summer we can offer a suggestion.

They may help the Toy and Crafts Fair that will be held in the autumn in aid of the Royal Free Hospital, Gray's Inn Road, London, and the School of Medicine for Women that is attached to the hospital.

The School of Medicine for Women has been the pioneer of medical education for women. It has 571 women graduates now living in England, and 800 graduates altogether, and women doctors are needed all over the world.

The hospital is trying to raise £500,000. One of its plans is to provide 100 beds for patients who can pay for their maintenance as well as free beds. Its Autumn Fair, in aid of its funds, will offer for sale wooden toys, dolls of all periods and nations, toy villages and farmyards, musical toys, scrapbooks, models of windmills, engines, and ships, modelling in clay and wax, stuff toys, basketwork, weaving, and beadwork, and there will be competitions between the makers of toys.

The Girl Guides and the Boy Scouts are interesting themselves in this work. The secretary, who will answer inquiries, is Dr. May Thorne, at the hospital.

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PROBLEM OF THE SPARROW

Does it do More Good than Harm?

WHY THERE ARE SO MANY YOUNG BIRDS ABOUT

By Our Country Correspondent

Just now an exceptionally large number of young house sparrows can be seen everywhere.

Whether we live in town or country we can scarcely help noticing just now the large number of young sparrows about.

These are the second brood, for the house sparrow is one of those birds that have several broods a year, and, seeing that there are so many sparrows, it is important, as well as interesting, to know whether it is a friend or a foe.

In towns the sparrow is undoubtedly useful as a scavenger, but when we consider the country there is much fierce controversy as to whether any good it does is not far outweighed by harm done in other directions.

Of course there is no doubt that it preys on the farmer's crops in autumn, and practically all farmers are emphatic that man should wage war against the sparrow as an enemy. In this they received the support of that great nature student the late Miss Ormerod.

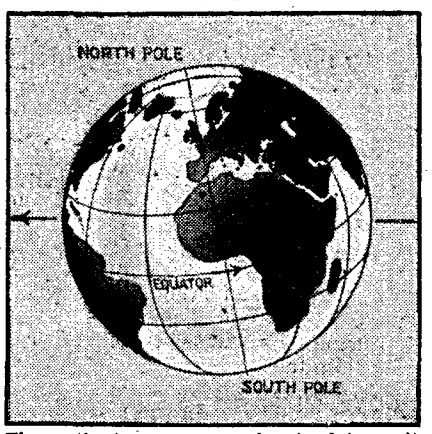
There is, however, another side to the question, which has been put very strikingly by the Rev. Theodore Wood. The house sparrow, he explains, destroys so many harmful insects that, on the whole, it must be regarded as a friend.

During the breeding season, now at its height, the sparrow feeds its young almost entirely on grubs and caterpillars. Careful observation has proved that in ten weeks one adult sparrow is responsible for the destruction of 30,000 insects, of which three-quarters are injurious.

Taking one with another, says Mr. Wood, each of these insects would eat at least 200 grains of corn or their equivalent, for the voracity of insects is almost beyond belief, so that for the harm it does to outweigh the good the sparrow would have to eat 200 grains for every injurious insect it destroys.

He finally comes to the conclusion that each adult sparrow must devour 1,125,000 grains of corn a year to counterbalance the good it does in the destruction of insect pests; and certainly it does not do this, or there would be no corn left.

THE EARTH SEEN FROM THE SUN



The earth at noon on any day in July as it would be seen through a telescope from the sun. The lines of latitude and longitude are put in to show the tilt. The arrows show the way the earth is travelling and rotating

NEXT WEEK IN THE GARDEN

Finish planting out the principal crops of broccoli for winter and spring use, also Brussels sprouts for winter use and cabbage for autumn use. Sow seeds of Early Horn carrots for drawing young. Plant out celeriac if not done last month. Continue to plant out celery, water abundantly, and earth up early crops when the plants are dry.

Sow seeds of Brompton, East Lothian, and other stocks, also various herbaceous plants such as aquilegia, delphiniums, polyanthus, antirrhinums, violas, and campanula. Cuttings of double wallflowers and pinks should also be inserted now.

A YARN BY THE CHIEF SCOUT

HOW THEY KILL A LION IN EAST AFRICA

Ring of Men Round the King of Beasts

THE COURAGE THAT WINS

By Sir Robert Baden-Powell

Do you know how the native warriors in East Africa kill a lion? I will tell you.

When they find a lion lying out in the plains they make a wide circle round the spot where he is; then gradually they all move in towards him, each man holding his shield in front and carrying his spear in his right hand.

These natives, the Masai and Nandis, carry a shield of oxhide and a spear six feet long, of which half is blade—an awfully murderous-looking weapon, and very heavy. When they get within about twenty yards of the lion they kneel down behind their shields, holding their spears ready to throw.

The lion, in the meantime, is getting very nervous and angry at this circle of men gradually drawing close to him on every side. Then the men move a yard or two nearer, and the lion begins to growl and show his teeth.

Another step nearer, and he begins to snarl. Again they creep a bit nearer. This is too much for him. He gives a quick look round, and then, with an angry half-roar, he charges at a warrior.

The Test of Bravery

This is the test of the warrior's courage. He does not move; his chance for glory has come. He lets the lion come on till within a few feet of him, and then launches his assegai smoothly and easily. The steel meets the lion in the chest and drives right through him, the point coming out again in his flank. The animal rolls over half paralysed, but recovers himself and again tries, in a lame and staggering way, to get at the man. But he, though unarmed, never moves. He trusts to those on his right and left, and just as the lion seems to reach him these launch their assegais into the lion from both sides, and he rolls over at once, to be dispatched in a few minutes by the rest.

The Reward of Valour

The first warrior then receives the lion's mane as a reward, and he proudly wears it afterwards as a headdress, for it is as big an honour to him as the Silver Wolf Badge is to the Boy Scout.

Of course, it all depends on whether he can face the lion at the dangerous moment. It must be a tremendous temptation to a man to get up and run when he sees the lion evidently going to make a spring for him with its enormous weight, and great claws and teeth, and cruel rage; but it is courage that enables him to stick tight and face the danger—just as it is courage that enables a Boy Scout or a Girl Guide to face the danger of a run-away horse, a blazing stairway, or a swirling river, to save a fellow-creature.

The danger may look pretty bad and tempt us to keep out of it, but with courage we grip ourselves and make ourselves face it, and we are afterwards glad that we did. For instance, 54 Boy Scouts won awards for actually saving lives last year, and three of them lost their own lives in the attempt. In addition to these, 17 Scouts were rewarded for plucky and meritorious actions, and 27 Girl Guides received rewards for life-saving and acts of bravery.

A PURER AIR FOR DIVERS

A mixture of helium and oxygen has been suggested for divers, to enable them to remain under water for much longer periods. The effect of the helium would be to help the lungs to expel the carbonic acid gas which is formed in breathing and is poisonous

C.N. QUESTION BOX

Little Puzzles in Natural History

Answered by Our Natural Historian

All questions must be asked on postcards, and not more than one question on each card.

What Kind of Noise Does a Rabbit Make?
When attacked or caught in a trap a rabbit utters a shrill scream.

Is it Cruel to Dock a Terrier's Tail?
Certainly it is, intensely cruel, and it is forbidden by the law of the land.

Does the Corncrake Migrate?
Yes, about the beginning of October it turns its back on England and flies to the Sunny South.

Can Tadpoles Live in Tap Water?
Yes, if they are supplied with food, but not otherwise. They must have nourishment, no matter what the source of the water supply.

Are there Humming Birds in England?
No. They could not live here, even in the best of aviaries. They must have a constant supply of nectar from flowers, and that we cannot furnish.

What is a Cock's Comb for?
Although it is freely supplied with blood vessels, the cock's comb seems to play no other part in the bird's life than that of a freakish ornament.

Have All Birds Ears?
Yes; though in birds these organs have no visible evidences. They are buried in the side of the head and lack external conches, such as we have.

Can Silkworms be Fed Upon Cabbage?
The caterpillars will eat pretty well any vegetation if given to them from birth. The writer has reared hundreds of silkworms on lettuce, but mulberry leaves are the proper food.

Why does an Angry Cat Wag its Tail?
Who can say? We know that a dog wags its tail when it is pleased and that a cat adopts a similar action when it is vexed and savage. In both cases we see the result of instinct.

What is a Blood Orange?
Not, as a correspondent suggests, an orange which is over-ripe, but merely a variety of which the fruit, or pulp, is a deep red. Similarly we have red potatoes, red bananas, red cabbages.

How does the Glowworm Make Its Light?
This remains a mystery, but it is believed that the light arises in the luminous cells from the slow oxidation of a substance which is controlled by the nervous organism. The light cells are considered to resemble the fat-cells.

Why has a Peacock a Hundred Eyes?
The writer cannot be sure as to the number of eye-like markings on a peacock's tail, and nobody can say why they occur, except that they are among the beauties with which Nature makes male birds gay and lovely in the sight of their mates.

What are the Size and Habits of a Hawfinch?
It measures seven inches from its powerful beak to the end of its black, brown and white-tipped tail feathers. It nests in hedges and low trees, eats seed, cracks fruit-stones to obtain the kernels, and is feared in gardens where peas are grown.

How High can a Salmon Leap?
We may not know the full powers of a determined salmon, but no one whose word can be trusted reports, from personal observation, a leap of more than six feet. Indeed, it is now laid down as a law that a sheer seven-feet leap will bar the course of a salmon up a river.

Are Birds' Nests Used as Food? Yes; they are collected in Java and the Malay Peninsula and sent in thousands to China, where they are regarded as a great delicacy. An interesting picture of the nests being gathered from a precipitous cliff overlooking the sea will be found in the July number of My Magazine—the C.N. monthly—now lying on the bookstalls with this paper.

FARTHEST FROM THE SUN

PARADOX OF SUMMER AND WINTER

Warm Bath in Which We Live and Move

WILL THE ANTARCTIC BECOME INHABITED?

By Our Astronomical Correspondent

Next Monday, notwithstanding the warm summer weather, we shall be at our farthest distance from the Sun, namely 94,453,000 miles away, so he will be over three million miles farther off than he was in the coldest days of last winter.

To many it appears astonishing that we should have almost our warmest weather when we are at our greatest distance from our great source of heat. But there are other circumstances that play an important part in determining our weather. The tilt of the Earth's axis is the chief, for it so happens that the northern half of our rotating ball is turned over to its greatest extent toward the Sun, 23½ degrees out of the perpendicular, just at this time, and we therefore receive 16 hours of sunlight and heat compared with only 8 hours at midwinter when we are at our nearest to the Sun—91,341,000 miles away.

Changes in the Weather

There are other causes besides the Sun that help to produce the vagaries of our weather.

Practically we spend our lives moving about at the bottom of what we might call a perpetually warm bath, in which are numerous currents, some a little above and some a little below a certain average of warmth. These variations, compared with what is possible and might happen, are really very small indeed in this country; the difference is only about 80 degrees between greatest heat and greatest cold, for which we ought to be thankful. That the extremes are not much greater is due to the "bath" itself.

From Winter to Summer

We all know that this terrestial bath of air is warmed up once a day by that celestial geyser, the Sun, and that it retains the heat at night when the geyser is, as it were, turned off. But it should also be remembered that our atmospheric bath has a boiler perpetually heating it from below. This boiler is the internal body of the Earth itself.

It is really very hot. If we went down only 50 feet the temperature would go up about one degree, and it goes on increasing, generally at about this rate, as we descend, so that if a lane were cut down into the Earth we should, at a distance of only half a mile, be able to step from midwinter and freezing point into the warmth of midsummer; while another 500 feet would carry us into an August heat wave beyond which few would care to go.

A Gigantic Boiler

Miners manage to go a little over a mile down, but they have cool air and mechanical appliances for keeping up a continual circulation. The temperature soon reaches a torrid heat, and at about two miles down we should have boiling water always ready, as shown by the water thrown up by hot springs.

The singular thing is that this enormous heat is relatively only just below the surface, and is constantly radiating away into our seas and "atmospheric bath," and so into space, our Earth being a gigantic boiler 25,000 miles round, but with a casing only two miles thick, sufficiently cool to be below the boiling point of water.

So we see how near we are to perpetual summer heat; indeed, it is just possible, with the advance of engineering skill, for the uninhabited Antarctic continent eventually to provide a home for the Earth's growing population. There people might live in tropical warmth beneath the surface, and in a couple of minutes be lifted to ice and snow. G. F. M.

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A MESSAGE FROM SPACE

A Thrilling Story of Flying Adventures Telling How Mars Saved the Earth

Told by GEORGE GOODCHILD

CHAPTER 29

On a Mountain Top

THE months that followed were full of arduous toil.

The quietude of Riobam was banished by the clanging of hammers and the hum of machinery. Hundreds of men were busy on the Dragon-Fly, overhauling every single part of her. Robert Breckneck, covered with oil and dust, surveyed progress with a contented smile. Out of these simple people he had made tolerably good engineers.

The whole country had but one subject to discuss—the airship. Special days were reserved on which visitors were allowed into the hangar. They came from outlying farmsteads to gaze on the monster and tremble. Wives and families came, like pilgrims of old, with their travelling requisites strapped on the backs of mules, and they took bits of scrap iron to show to their less fortunate neighbours.

In the meanwhile, Tom and Hennessee and a gang of sturdy labourers were busy on the construction of the mountain wireless station.

Mount Cap, as they called it, reared its great bulk 6000 feet into the air. It was absolutely barren, a mass of solid rock with but one means of ascent, and that a precipitous path on its northern side. It formed part of the solid wall which cut off the outer world from Riobam. Even when the ascent was made, further progress was rendered impossible by the mountains beyond.

Up this awful path all the apparatus had to be taken.

The Riobamians were good mountaineers. They themselves had made this solitary path in the hope of finding what lay beyond the mountains. They, like the mules, seemed quite oblivious to the dizzy depths beneath them as they stood on the fringe of the clouds and looked at the fairy city below.

But Tom's first experience was terrible. Hennessee confessed to the biggest attack of funk he had ever experienced, and Rolf's face was as white as the drifting clouds that at times enveloped them.

They were half-way up, on the first journey, when Tom's first attack of vertigo came. He felt his head swim as he foolishly looked down three thousand feet of space. He wanted to shriek, but his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth. He hid his face in his hands.

It was Andrak, one of the mulemen, who saved him from utter disgrace. He stood on the sheer edge of the precipice, and linked his arm in Tom's. Then, with a smile, he pointed to the path, and said:

"In the mountains, as in life, one's eyes should always be looking forward."

In two minutes Tom felt better. They came upon Rolf sitting on a rock, with blanched face. His hands were clinging to a projecting point.

"Come on!" cried Hennessee, from above.

"I can't," gasped Rolf. "I'm going to fall. Everything seems swimming about. Oh horrors!"

Tom, so recently visited by the same terror, felt genuinely sorry. Andrak looked at him.

"Can you manage?"

"Yes. I'm quite all right now," replied Tom.

To prove it he relinquished the kindly arm and made away up the mountain, and Andrak went to the aid of Rolf.

Fortunately the summit was comparatively flat. It gave them opportunity to rest in comfort and to regain their equanimity.

Rolf came and sat near Tom.

"All right now?" queried Tom.

Rolf glared at him.

"It's all your fault," he grumbled. "It's mad—clean mad—to build a station up here. How are we going to get down again?"

"Climb down."

Rolf shivered. At that moment he felt he hated Tom as he had never hated anyone else. Certainly he hated the mountain more, but if it hadn't been for Tom——

After a week the road was made easier by the driving in of iron staves with a hand rope attached. The two hours' climb was still an arduous business, but they got used to that. Once the hut was erected and all the apparatus at hand, they brought up provisions and stayed on the top until the work was completed.

Living on a mountain became the most wonderful thing in the world. After the inevitable attack of mountain sickness the trio got thoroughly to enjoy their experience.

Even Rolf admitted it was not so bad. But his antipathy towards Tom still remained. He was nursing a grievance, and that grievance was nothing less than a violent attack of jealousy.

As the building of the station went forward, so Tom's genius came into play. All kinds of improvements were made to the instruments. The sending instruments had suffered a good deal by the collision, but the receiving apparatus had been sensitised to an extraordinary degree by an invention of Tom's, which Hennessee averred marked an epoch in the evolution of wireless telegraphy. While he was complimenting Tom upon this Rolf was as glum as a goldfish.

One afternoon Hennessee went down to the plain to get one or two extra terminals, and Tom and Rolf were engaged in getting tea. Conversation was impossible, for Rolf refused to respond to every invitation to talk. At last Tom could stand it no longer.

"Look here, Rolf," he blurted out, "why can't we be friends?"

"We are, aren't we?"

"It doesn't look like it."

"What do you expect me to do? Hang on your neck and kiss you?"

"Don't talk rot. Here we are, thousands of miles away from our people—don't you think it's silly for us to be at loggerheads?"

"Who's at loggerheads?"

"We are—at least, you are. What have I done to bring this about?"

"Everything. You are too blessed conceited for any chap to tolerate you."

If anything could have surprised Tom it was this. His eyes opened in amazement. To be told that one is conceited raises a very difficult point, for to deny it with any vigour is merely to endorse the accusation. Tom realised this, and flushed to the roots of his hair.

"Rolf!" he gasped. "You don't think that?"

"I do. It's nothing but 'Tom this' and 'Tom that.' I'm sick of it! Hennessee is worse than the others. He never notices anyone but you."

"But I don't like it any more than you," retorted Tom, with truthfulness. "If I've done anything to help things along it's just luck. You know forty times more than I about dynamos and voltage; but it's much harder to discover any new things about them. For at least six months we have got to be together. It's going to be a miserable time—for me—if we aren't going to be better chums."

Rolf muttered something.

"Come on," said Tom, holding out his hand. "Let's forget all about the past and start afresh."

For a few seconds Rolf was silent, and then he gripped Tom's hand.

"All right," he said cheerily. "I'm sorry. You mustn't mind what I said. The fact is, I want to get back to Devonshire again to see my people. I wish we could get a message through somehow, just to tell them we aren't dead. I dreamed about them last night. I dreamed they were all miserable because they had given up hope, and that Ida——"

"Yes?" said Tom, anxiously.

"Ida was weeping. That made it worse than anything."

"Of course," said Tom. He gave a sigh as he thought of Joan. It was cruel that she should live in such unnecessary misery.

"Do you think there will be the slightest chance of getting a message through?" asked Rolf.

Tom shook his head.

"Tomorrow we shall see. But our sending range can't be more than a thousand miles, and it's farther than that to the coast."

They forgot their personal antagonism in reminiscences of the things they held dear—Dartmoor, Exmoor, and the delightful Devon rivers that ran through the red soil of the West.

CHAPTER 30

The Message

THE next day the station was completed. With what intense anxiety did they take the receivers and intercept messages! The result was staggering. Tom's invention had opened up the world to them.

From all ends of the earth came messages — in English, French, Italian, even Greek. Ships at sea flashed out requisitions to ports and harbours. Government messages in cipher and quotations from the Stock Exchange all came to this mountain station in the midst of a Brazilian wilderness.

"It's wonderful," said Hennessee. "By Jove, Tom, you ought to make a fortune when you get home and have it patented."

"Try sending," said Rolf.

But transmitting was a miserable failure. No reply came to repeated calls.

"It's no use," said Tom. "We can do nothing till we get new sending instruments. It would take us years to make them here."

The next few weeks were full of incidents. Agassir was wedded to Zita, and Tom was invited to the celebrations that followed. He came away fully convinced that there must be something in love, after all, and that the Riobamians were the happiest people on earth.

Smorton, the chemist, had already manufactured 100,000 cubic feet of hydrogen by the process of heating aluminium with caustic soda solution, and was busy increasing the supply. It was carried to the balloonettes of the Dragon-Fly as it was manufactured, and already the vessel was beginning to look her old self again.

In the hot, hissing foundry Robert's men were going ahead with the steering gear. They were well ahead of scheduled time, and as each part of the complicated mechanism was completed they consulted the schedule and found that they had gained an hour or a day more.

But all these details were completely overshadowed by the extraordinary thing which happened on the top of Mount Cap.

The two lads had for the past two weeks taken duty alternately at the wireless station. From all the world-wide messages that were intercepted they made notes, with a view to apprising the crew of the events that were happening in far-away Europe.

They made a kind of daily news sheet, which was eagerly perused by all. The gist of all the news that flashed from continent to continent was in that sheet.

One sunny morning Tom climbed the mountain and sat down at the table with the receiver over his head. Scraps of news came from all sides as he tuned the instrument to intercept them, some fairly clear and some extremely faint. He was in the midst of recording an interesting piece of news when a strange thing happened. A message came so loud and clear that it astonished him. He began to transcribe it.

"E-a-r-t-h."

That was all. It puzzled him. Then it came again.

"E-a-r-t-h — a-r-e y-o-u E-a-r-t-h?"

Mechanically he gave the usual acknowledgment. He was in the midst of cogitating on this mystery when another message came:

"W-e a-r-e t-h-e p-l-a-n-e-t M-a-r-s."

He almost fell off the chair with fright.

Then it occurred to him that someone was playing a joke. But who could it be? Why should anyone want to play a silly joke like that? Mars was perhaps about fifty million miles distant then, and this message seemed to come from a few miles away.

Thinking to get even with this unknown joker, he signalled:

"Is that your christian or your surname?"

He waited for a reply, but none came. He sighed and began to sort out the fainter buzzings. It was seven minutes later when, to Tom's amazement, the loud message came again. It said:

"So you have a sense of humour on Earth—we wondered. This is the planet Mars. Remember, it takes only four minutes for your message to reach us. We have been waiting to speak to you for twelve hundred years. Your sending is bad. Why have you not tried before? Tell us something of Earth. Our knowledge is necessarily small. Is it ice at the poles? Is the volcano by the inland sea in the Northern zone in eruption? We cannot see clearly——"

So the questions ran, one on another, as fast as Tom could write them down.

If the messages came from Mars, as the senders stated, how was it that they had received Tom's signals over that tremendous distance when his transmitting apparatus was almost useless for ordinary work?

Tom could find no suitable explanation. He was bewildered with the events of that wonderful day, during the whole of which his instrument was working. When his spell of duty was over, he ran down the mountain, and arrived breathless in the big room where the crew were seated.

Robert stared at the sight of his wild eyes.

"Something wonderful has happened," Tom cried deliriously. "I've got messages from Mars!"

Then he staggered and fell prone on the floor in a dead faint.

Gellett and Robert ran to him.

"Poor lad!" said Gellett. "He has overdone it. His mind is unhinged!"

TO BE CONTINUED

THE JOLLY FAIRY STORY PAPER

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Every Friday

Five-Minute Story

The Conqueror

FRANCIS FARRELL had come to Sea Point with his father and mother for a holiday. It was just the kind of place that a boy loves: rather lonely, with good stretches of rocks to explore, and towering cliffs where sea birds nested.

There was great excitement in the village, for a visitor from London had lost a valuable diamond bracelet on the beach, and a reward of £100 was offered for its recovery. Notices were posted up and search parties organised.

Francis resolved that he, too, would try to find the jewel. Accordingly, the next day, just as a faint, grey light was beginning to take the place of the darkness, Francis stole out of the cottage and made for the beach.

After an hour's work, raking the shingles and turning over stones and seaweed, Francis began to lose hope, and, relaxing his efforts, idly watched the progress of a small crab making for shelter under a boulder, under which it disappeared. Francis groped in the hollow under the boulder to bring the little creature back, and brought out—the missing bracelet!

While he was trying to recover from his astonishment a shout made him look round, and he saw a rough-looking man running towards him.

"Now then!" the tramp cried, holding Francis with an iron grip. "That's mine, d'ye hear? I've been looking for it for hours. Come! Give it to me!"

Francis struggled, but he was no match for his powerful assailant, and soon he had to see the ruffian making off down the beach with the treasure in his hand.

Sighing, the boy turned to go, when he saw a speck in the sky, which grew bigger as it came from the sea to the land. It was a seaplane; and Francis watched it dip lower and lower till it rested on the water.

A wild idea flashed across the boy's mind. He ran and scrambled quickly over the rocks, and waded through the water till he reached the plane, in which sat the pilot studying a map.

Gaspingly, Francis told his story, and the airman, with one glance at the rapidly retreating figure of the thief, now about a mile away, motioned to the boy to climb into the passenger's seat.

With a thrill Francis obeyed, and soon the rocks and sand were spinning away from beneath them.

In an incredibly short time they overtook the runaway, who was seeking a way up the cliffs. Finding himself cornered, he prepared to fight Francis and his new friend, who, however, soon settled the affair with the production of an army revolver.

Of course, when Francis was the proud owner of his big reward he did not forget the gallant pilot who had helped him to success when failure seemed inevitable.

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Gratefully, Cheerily, Enjoy the Hours that Fly



Dr MERRYMAN

THE man was eyeing his egg suspiciously.

"Hasn't your egg been cooked long enough, sir?" inquired the waiter.

"Oh, yes!" he replied. "But it was not cooked soon enough."

⊡ ⊡ ⊡

The Boy Up the Pole

"HOW long will it take you to climb this pole?" said Harry to his little brother.

The pole was twenty feet high, and Neville climbed at the rate of four feet a minute. But each minute, having climbed four feet, he slipped back three.

How long did it take Neville to reach the top? *Answer next week*

⊡ ⊡ ⊡

WHY is a man just put in prison like a leaky boat?

Because he requires bailing out.

⊡ ⊡ ⊡

The Bull's Lament

"MY tears," sighed the bull, "fall in drips.
I've got two horns with nice curly tips:
Two horns, yet I loathe 'em,
Because I can't blow them;
They're both out of reach of my lips."

⊡ ⊡ ⊡

Two Kinds of Spectacles

AN old gentleman was entertaining some friends with stories of his extensive travels during a roving life.

He was enthusiastic concerning the big cities of America, but when extolling the glories of some of the natural phenomena of that wonderful land he was carried away with enthusiasm, and concluded: "Believe me, my friends, there are many spectacles that one can never forget."

An old lady who had been rather ill at ease during the discourse was suddenly all attention.

"I wish you would tell me where I can get a pair. I am always forgetting mine," she said.

⊡ ⊡ ⊡

WHAT tree is older than the oak?
The elder.

⊡ ⊡ ⊡



Adventures of Augustus & Marmaduke

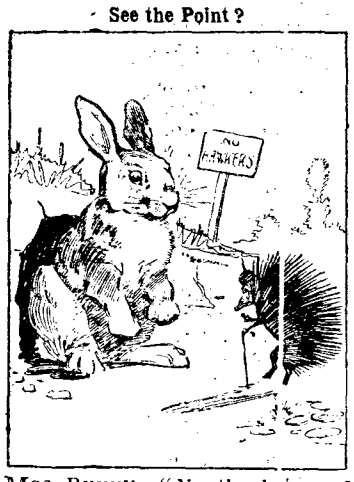
FARMER JOHNSON kept a cow.
Said Marmaduke one day,
"We'll milk that cow tomorrow,
Before we go to play."
Each boy took a bucket big,
And walked up to the cow;
But Marmy dropped his bucket—
It fell and made a row!
"Here's the farmer!" Gussie cried;
Said Marmaduke, "Let's run."
"I'll teach those boys," the farmer said,
"To steal my milk for fun."
Upon their heads he put the pails,
And pressed them very hard,
And now they're wandering round and round
In Farmer Johnson's yard.

Is Your Name Rickard?

THIS is a changed form of the name Richard, which means stern king. Richard was, of course, first of all a fore name, now called a Christian name, and later became a surname.

⊡ ⊡ ⊡

See the Point?



MRS. BUNNY: "No, thank you. I don't want any needles today!"

⊡ ⊡ ⊡

Buried Flowers

The name of a well-known flower is buried in each of these sentences:

SHALL I put this scrap in Kate's album?

Tell your father I called to see him.

What lovely hair! I should like mine to curl like it.

If that man is insane, money should not be given him.

My cousin Ada is your sister-in-law.

Do you know what the flowers are? *Solutions next week*

⊡ ⊡ ⊡

WHY were gloves never meant to be sold?

Because they were meant to be kept on hand.

⊡ ⊡ ⊡

Mildred's and Mary's Nature Notes

The Greeny Caterpillar

THE greeny caterpillar
Can make a Grecian bend;
No legs has he amidships,
But some at either end,
So humps his little back up
Till fore and aft ones meet,
And slowly comes a-looping
Along our garden seat.

Now, greeny caterpillar
Just loves to have a swing,
And dangles in the sunshine
Upon his silken string.
He's not a bit "partikler,"
And if you go too near
You'll find him down your collar
Or curled up in your ear.

⊡ ⊡ ⊡

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES

What Is This?

XLLENT. X=10. L=50. ENT is TEN with the letters transposed.

The Problem of the Petrol

There were three cans respectively of 8 pints, 5 pints, and 3 pints capacity. We will call these A, B, and C.

A was full of petrol, and the others were empty.

The motor-cyclist first filled C from A, leaving five pints in A. The three pints in C were then poured into B. C was again filled from A, so that there were then two, three, and three pints respectively in A, B, and C.

B, of five pints capacity, was then filled from C, so that only one pint remained in C. The five pints from B were then emptied into A, making seven pints, nothing, and one pint respectively in A, B and C. The one pint in C was then emptied into B.

C, of three pints capacity was once more filled from A, leaving four pints in A, which was the quantity required.

Events in History Peninsular Campaign lasted 1808 to 1814

Who Was He?

The Great Astronomer was Copernicus

Jacko On the Milk Round

JACKO was very much interested in the milk-cart as it came clattering into the yard every morning.

"That's a nice little pony," he observed one day. "What's her name?"

"Topsy," said his uncle.

"Can I give her some sugar?" asked Jacko.

His uncle nodded, and Jacko, having emptied the sugar-basin, ran out.

"He's a bit of a rascal," remarked his uncle, who was beginning to know the young gentleman, "but his heart's all right."

"Yes," said his aunt. "He means well. I'm sure he does."

Meanwhile Jacko was making friends with the pony.

"I say," said Jacko to the milkman, "I wish you would let me drive her!"

"Not if I know it!" replied the man. "That's more than my job is worth."

Jacko considered a bit.

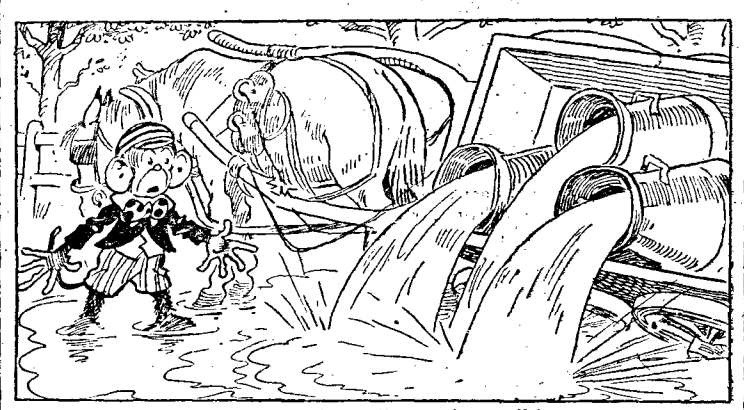
"Well, can I come with you?" he asked—for they were just off on the afternoon round.

The man agreed to that, so Jacko jumped up beside him, and away they went.

It was rather nice jogging along the country lanes, but it wasn't exciting enough for Master Jacko.

"Here!" he said at last. "If I can't drive I'll serve out the milk," and, without waiting for a reply, he grabbed the measure and sprang out. He darted into the cottage they were stopping at, and came back with the customer's jug.

"Look out!" warned the man. "Don't splash it out like that! You are spilling more than you are pouring out!"



The cart and the milk were in—well in

But little things like that didn't worry Jacko. When the jug was full he darted back with it to the old woman at the cottage door.

Running up the path he caught his foot on a stone, stumbled, and dropped the jug. It dropped on the stones in a hundred pieces.

"He's broken my best pitcher!" screamed the old woman.

And she made such a commotion that the milkman had to get down to pacify her.

"What a fuss to make about a jug!" muttered Jacko; and in the excitement he ran back to the cart, picked up the reins, and drove off.

"Hurroo! This is better!" he cried, beaming all over his face. "Gee up, Topsy!"

The mare threw back her ears and trotted obediently off.

But she didn't go fast enough for Jacko, who stupidly gave her a touch of the whip.

Then Topsy, startled and indignant, flung up her hind legs, and dashed off—straight for the pond by the side of the road.

"Whoa!" cried Jacko, tugging at the reins.

But before he could stop her she had reached the water, and was in it—well in!

And soon, unfortunately, was the rest of the milk.

Ici on Parle Français



Le dirigeable Un écureuil Le bambou
Le dirigeable traversera la mer
Nous admirons le petit écureuil
Le bambou est solide et léger



Le tombeau Le furet La courge
Une grille entoure le tombeau
Le furet va à la chasse aux lapins
Les courges sont parfois énormes

Notes and Queries

What Is Flash Point? The temperature at which oil gives off an explosive vapour that becomes inflammable.

What is Mean Time? Time as shown by clocks and watches, which give an average of 24 hours a day, and not the fluctuating length of the day as marked by the sun.

What is an Atom? The smallest portion into which matter can be divided and still preserve its identity. Atoms, however, it is now known, are made up of smaller particles called electrons.

Tales Before Bedtime

Bella Rings Up

BELLA stood upon a high chair and called in a loud voice, "Hallo! Hallo!" just as she had heard her Daddie call many a time.

At first there was no answer; then somebody said "Yes?" and Bella said, "Will you please tell John I want to speak to him?"

"Who are you?" asked the voice—it sounded strange, yet she thought she knew it.

"I'm Bella, the doctor's little girl," she replied. "Are you John?"

There was just a little pause, and then the voice said "Yes."

"Oh!" said Bella. "Then will you come to tea today? And be sure not to forget to bring your white rat with you."

And with that she jumped down and ran out into the garden to play.

"Cousin John is coming to tea," she told her mother. "I telephoned to ask him."

"You telephoned!" exclaimed her mother. "But how did you find the number?"

Bella didn't understand. And she was very surprised when her mother explained how the lady at the Post Office had to arrange it all before you could speak to the person you wanted.

"I don't suppose you spoke to the Post Office at all," said her mother. "It just happened, I expect, that a stranger was speaking to a number in the village, and the wires got muddled up. They do sometimes. It couldn't have been John."

"But it was," insisted Bella. "He said he was John. I asked him. He'll come, I'm sure."

But he didn't. Bella waited for him in vain.

They had just sat down to tea when there was a ring at the



"Are you John?"

bell. The maid came in carrying a basket. There was a note, too, addressed to Bella, and this is what it said:

"I am sorry I can't come to tea, and I haven't a white rat. But perhaps a milk-white kitten will do instead. Here she is, anyway, with love from John."

"Why," cried her mother, "it is from Uncle John. That is his handwriting Oh, Bella! It wasn't your little cousin, after all. It was Uncle John. He always was a tease."

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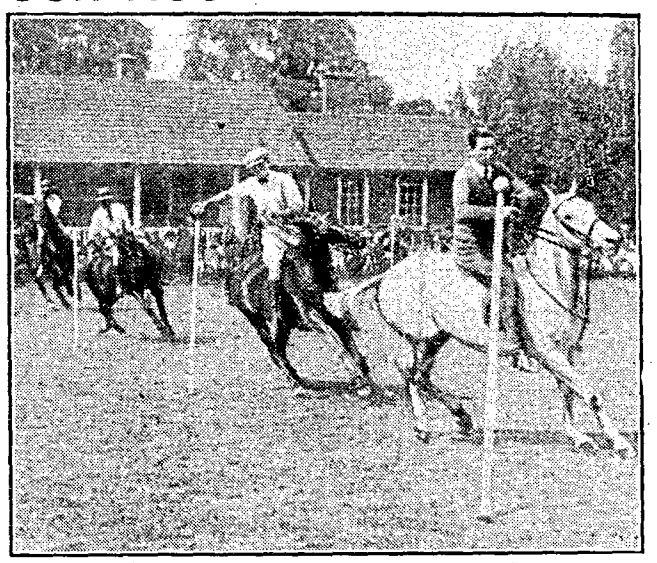
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CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPER

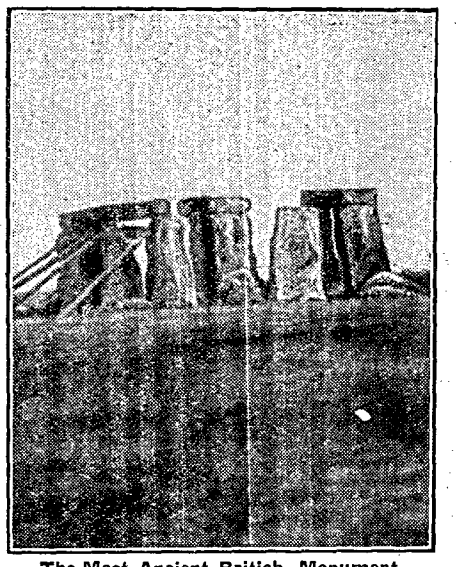
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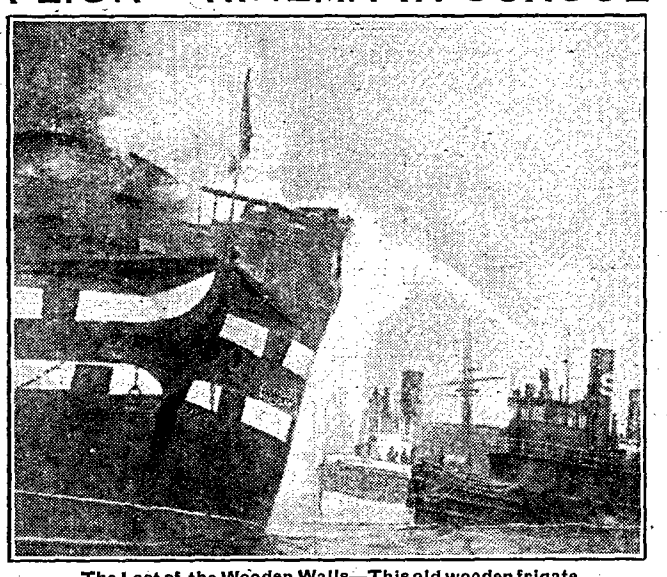
OUR MOST ANCIENT MONUMENT · MATCH FOR A LION · KINEMA IN SCHOOL



An Exciting Race—One of the most interesting features of a pony gymkhana at Roehampton recently was a race in which the competitors had to take a series of balls from posts and place them in baskets as they galloped by



The Most Ancient British Monument, Stonehenge, which recent discoveries have proved to be even older than was at one time supposed. See page one



The Last of the Wooden Walls—This old wooden frigate that fought on the side of the U.S.A. against Great Britain in the war of 1812 was recently destroyed by fire. Here we see the vain attempts to stay the flames



A Young Archer—A 16-year-old competitor at the recent archery meeting in Regent's Park, London



Open to Boys and Girls Once More—Kensington Gardens, which has been occupied by the military for several weeks past, is now open to the public once more, and here we see a party of young visitors getting their boats ready for a sail on the Round Pond, which is often the scene of model yacht races



A New Advertisement—These giants recently marched through the streets of Antwerp to advertise a new article



A Polar Bear Keeping Cool—During the hot spell this Polar bear at the London Zoo spent most of his time in the water



A Match for a Lion—This African buffalo at the London Zoo is a powerful animal that is quite a match for the king of beasts



Abraham Lincoln Takes Tea—At the recent Summer School at King's College in London the students acted Mr. John Drinkwater's famous play "Abraham Lincoln," and here we see the White House scene in which Lincoln takes tea



The Kinema in School—A natural history lesson, illustrated by moving pictures, being given in a North London school. A Commission of Inquiry is now sitting to consider the whole question of instruction by kinema in schools

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